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CHRISTIAN THEISM:

THE TESTIMONY
OF REASON AND REVELATION TO THE EXISTENCE AND CHARACTER
OF THE SUPREME BEING.

BY

ROBERT ANCHOR THOMPSON, M.A.

Μία μεν οὖν ἡ τῆς ἀληθειας ὁδὸς, ἀλλ' εἰς αὐτὴν καθάπερ εἰς ἀένναον ποταμὸν ἐκρέουσι τὰ ῥεῖθρα ἄλλα ἄλλοθεν.

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CHRISTIAN THEISM.

THE EVIDENCE THAT THERE IS A BEING ALL POWERFUL, WISE, AND GOOD, BY WHOM EVERY THING EXISTS: AND PARTICULARLY TO OBVIATE DIFFICULTIES REGARDING THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF THE DEITY; AND THIS, IN THE FIRST PLACE, FROM CONSIDERATIONS INDEPENDENT OF WRITTEN REVELATION; AND, IN THE SECOND PLACE, FROM THE REVELATION OF THE LORD JESUS; AND, FROM THE WHOLE, TO POINT OUT THE INFERENCES MOST NECESSARY FOR, AND USEFUL TO MANKIND.

PREFACE.

A GENTLEMAN of Aberdeen, who died in 1784, left, besides numerous munificent bequests to local charities, a fund to be applied every forty years to the foundation of premiums, open to public competition, for the encouragement of writings on the subject of the present Treatise. He expressly requests that his name may not be mentioned in the public announcements of the competition. But it was impossible that it should remain unknown; and one of the successful treatises published in 1816 contains a notice of his life and character.

He was a merchant of liberal education, enterprising, honorable, and successful, but was one of those minds of higher order, always to be found among the merchants of Britain, who do not think it the only nor the first purpose of life to amass a fortune. Deeply impressed with the truth of a future life, and with a feeling of its supreme importance, he showed, not only by posthumous benevolence, of which examples are to be found in men who have been sordid and selfish, but much more in the whole conduct of his life, that he had a clear view of the practical character of true religion, and hoped, by conformity to the great law of love to God and man, to be fitted for a better existence hereafter.

Though without family of his own, he felt bound to transmit to his heirs a fortune equal to that which he had inherited. His gains in trade he devoted, in his lifetime and by his will, to charitable purposes. The estate from which the

premiums and other bequests are paid, was set apart by him with this intention in 1774, ten years before his death, and when he was only forty-five years of age. During his lifetime, numbers of aged and sick poor were dependent upon his beneficence; and he left a sum of money in charge of the synod of Aberdeen for the support of bedridden and diseased persons. He also provided for the extension of vaccination (then inoculation) in Aberdeen; for the support of a chaplain for poor persons in the jail; for the comfortable maintenance of pauper lunatics, and for whatever appeared to him to be, at that time, the most urgent wants of the municipal institutions of Aberdeen. He thus proved by his piety, his integrity, and his charity that he was actuated by the spirit of practical Christianity.

He appears, however, to have been unable to attach himself to any particular religious community. It remains on record, in his own words; "I have not been able to join in public worship, as I could not declare a conviction of the whole of what is professed." But, although it is not known what may have been his difficulties, it is evident, from other passages, written at the same time, that he sincerely believed the chief Christian doctrines, and was deeply affected with a sense of their importance.

His sensitive conscientiousness is shown by a well-authenticated tradition, that when a mercantile adventure turned out more profitable than he considered fair and just in proportion to his outlay, he frequently insisted on sharing his unexpected profits with those from whom he had purchased. When asked if he thought his correspondents would have dealt as liberally with him if his bargain had proved unfavorable, his reply was, "With the conduct of others I have nothing to do. It is my duty to regulate my own by the rules of equity, as they appear to me."[1]

[1] Dr. Brown's Essay, p. xxii.

It may be interesting to add some short extracts from the deed of settlement of the estate from which the Theological prize fund is drawn. They will show especially his anxiety for the success of his scheme. He says:

"Whereas I am highly sensible of the value of every action in any degree acceptable in the sight of Almighty God; and, being also sensible of the transitoriness of this life, and of the importance of our situation in a future state; . . . . I did, in the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-Eight, resolve to set aside a part of what Providence had, in very great bounty, given me by trade, for charitable purposes, and to bestow the produce thereof in that manner during my lifetime, and to settle the same to be applied to pious and charitable purposes after my death; in hopes that, after destinating such share of my substance to my relations and connections as different circumstances seem to make proper, that the overplus of what it has pleased Providence to bestow on me by trade would be used so as that I might humbly hope it would be approved of by that Great and Good Being who has bestowed it on me."

He then appoints a sum of not less than sixteen hundred pounds to be applied every forty years to the foundation of two premiums; three fourths thereof to be given to the person who shall write and lay before the judges, appointed as he directs, the treatise which shall be judged by them to have the most merit; the remaining fourth to the writer of the treatise which shall be judged by them next in merit to the former; the subject to be, upon the evidence

"That there is a Being all-powerful, wise, and good, by whom every thing exists; and as the power of the Deity is easily shown, in pointing out the considerations particularly, by which, notwithstanding the pains we are often subject to, we may hope and trust in the goodness of the Deity, both in this state and in the reasonable expectation of a fu-

ture one; and in taking notice of the comforts arising to mankind from these considerations independent of Revelation; and farther, in considering these doctrines confirmed by the blessed JESUS as sent by God."

A codicil, added in the year of his death, somewhat changes the form of the thesis, and requests that it may stand as follows:

"That there is a Being, all-powerful, wise, and good, by whom every thing exists; and particularly to obviate difficulties regarding the Wisdom and Goodness of the Deity; and this, in the first place, from considerations independent of written Revelation; and, in the second place, from the Revelation of the LORD JESUS; and, from the whole, to point out the inferences most necessary for, and useful to mankind."

"I am very desirous," he adds, "to declare, that I humbly adore the Divine intentions, in the mission of the LORD JESUS, His Sufferings, and bitter Death; and which, we are taught, were a proper means, in the Divine Wisdom, for the forgiveness of sins, and conferring other benefits on mankind; humbly adopting the Divine intentions, so far as I understand them, praying to be more enlightened. I see it a great duty to be deeply impressed with the inexpressible Love of our Lord Jesus to mankind, and with a sense of the invaluable benefits they receive by Him.

"The striking attention of Providence through nature, in its mighty and minute branches, with other numerous evidences, probably give proofs of the Attributes of the Deity. Some, unhappily, do not acknowledge Revelation, and think all is doubtful. To such, considerations independent of Revelation are necessary. To bring them to the conviction of a Deity is of the utmost consequence, and a step to a belief in Revelation. The considerations on the subject may be beneficial to all."

The deed empowers the ministers of the Established Church of Aberdeen, the Principals and Professors of King's and Marischal Colleges, Aberdeen, and the Trustees of the Testator, to elect and appoint three persons, whom they, in their consciences, shall think to be best qualified to be judges, either from among themselves or otherwise, for determining upon the merits of any treatises which may be laid before them. The judges are required to make a public and solemn declaration that they will give their judgments and opinions without partiality, and agreeable to the intention of the testator. They are to decide either unanimously, or by plurality of votes, and in case of all three differing from one another, other judges are to be appointed. If unanimous, they may find that none of the treatises produced have sufficient merit to be entitled to the premiums.

In accordance with these dispositions, the term for the first competition on this foundation expired on January 1st, 1814; and on the 4th of August, 1815, the prizes were adjudged to the treatise entitled "An Essay on the Existence of a Supreme Creator," by Dr. William Lawrence Brown, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and that entitled "Records of Creation," by the Rev. John Bird Sumner, now Archbishop of Canterbury.

The second competition, of which the term expired on January 1st, 1854, had been announced during several years previously. Besides the above particulars, the advertisement states the whole amount of the fund to be, on this occasion, about £2400; and continues:

"The Trustees, deeply sensible of the importance of the Founder's design, and anxious, as far as lies in them, to do full justice to his wishes, venture to give an assurance that, in appointing the Judges at the proper time, nothing will be regarded but that eminence of character and qualification which shall secure a satisfactory decision.

"As it tends much to an impartial decision that the names of the Authors should be concealed from the Judges, the Trustees request that the Treatises may not be in the handwriting of their respective Authors, nor have their names annexed to them. Each Treatise must be distinguished by a peculiar motto; this motto must be written on the outside of a sealed letter, containing the Author's name and his address, and sent along with his performance. The names of the successful candidates only shall be known by opening their letters. The other letters shall be destroyed unopened."

On this occasion 208 Treatises were delivered to the Trustees. On the appointment of the Judges it may be said, without assumption, that it proved the anxiety of the Trustees to do justice to the Founder's intentions, and "to insure a satisfactory decision."

Notwithstanding the large number of Treatises to be examined, the Judges completed their labors in about a year. The following is a copy of their report:

"*Report of the Judges.*

"We, the Judges appointed for the Burnett prizes, in reporting to the Trustees the result at which we have arrived, feel it necessary first to state that, after giving careful examination to the whole of the Treatises sent in, we have found considerable difficulty in coming to a decision, not on account of any difference of opinion among ourselves, but on account of the very near approach to equality of merit in a considerable number of the Treatises.

"We should have been glad to find that there had been two Treatises so incontestably superior to the rest as to release us from all hesitation. Still, though there is no Essay which, in our judgment, is not greatly capable of improvement, by omission or alteration (which we mention with ref-

erence to the future publication of such Essays), we are unanimously of opinion that there are *three* which stand, by an appreciable interval, in advance of the rest, viz.:

"(No. 143, in Mr. Webster's list.)—'Christian Theism.' Motto, Τὸ ἀγαθὸν τῶν μὲν εὖ ἐχόντων αἴτιον τῶν δὲ κακῶν ἀναίτιον. (2 vols.)

"(No. 141, *ibid.*)—'Theism,' &c. Motto, ζητεῖν τὸν Κύριον κ. τ. λ.—Acts, xvii. 27. (1 vol. bound.)

"(No. 1, *ibid.*)—'The Witness of God, or, the Evidence of his Being and Perfections.' Motto, οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν.—Acts, xiv. 17. 'Ask now the beasts,' &c.—Job, xii. 7. (2 vols.)

"We are also of opinion, that of these, *No.* 143, '*Christian Theism*,' &c., deserves the first place, and therefore to it we adjudge the first prize.

"As to the other two, we find much greater difficulty in deciding which of them should be preferred. If the Trust Deed left a choice to the Judges in this matter, we should have awarded them *equal*. But as this does not appear to be the case, we deem it necessary to state that *two of our number* are disposed to assign a certain preference to *No.* 141, and that the third acquiesces in that judgment, since at the utmost he would have been disposed only to place them equal.

"And further, in compliance with a wish expressed by the Trustees (in a minute communicated by Mr. Webster), we beg to add that several other Treatises appeared to us to possess considerable merit (though requiring extensive alteration and careful revision), more particularly the following (placed, *not* in order of merit, but of the numbers in Mr. Webster's list), viz.:

"(No. 72.)—'Of Providence, Material and Moral.' Motto, 'Ignotus.' (In 6 vols.)

"(No. 81.)—'Evidence for the Being, Power, Wisdom,

and Goodness of God. Motto, 'Nulla gens est tam barbara,' &c.—*Cic.* (3 vols. bound.)

"(No. 84.)—'On the Evidence that there is a Being, Allpowerful,' &c. Motto, *οὐ δοκεῖν ἄριστον ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλω.* (2 vols.)

"(No. 125.)—'The Anthem of Creation,' &c. Motto, '*μέγας ἐν τούτοις Θεός.* (3 vols. bound.)

"(No. 183.)—'On Natural Theology.' Motto, 'Alpha and Omega.' (2 vols.)

"Also, among the smaller Essays, some, though not competing with the above-mentioned, appear to us of a kind likely to be useful, subject to the same remarks, viz.:

("No. 117.)—Motto, 'Semper et ubique.'

("No. 127.)—'On the Existence,' &c. 'Si quod gubernat numen,' &c. 'If there's a Power above us.'

"(No. 206.)—'On the Being, Attributes,' &c. Motto, 'Lebensquelle.'

"(No. 162.)—'The Basis of Truth,' &c.—a fragment, but of great promise.

"(Signed), BADEN POWELL.
HENRY ROGERS.
ISAAC TAYLOR."

This Report was laid before a public meeting of the electors in the Town Hall of Aberdeen, on January 20, 1855, when the sealed envelopes, bearing the titles and mottoes of the treatises 143 and 141 were produced by the Trustees, and the first prize was adjudged to the present Treatise, the second to the Rev. John Tulloch, Manse of Kettins, Coupar Angus, now Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrew's.

On the following treatise, few preliminary observations are requisite. Though ultimately directed to meet the appointed thesis, it is, in some parts, founded on notes which had been made without this reference, and before I had heard

of the expected competition. Under other circumstances, I should have thought it necessary to pay more attention to the works of several eminent writers, both British and Continental, which I have not had the opportunity of examining, as I should have wished, before I had ventured to lay before the public any thoughts of my own upon the subjects of this Essay. Even the works of Sir William Hamilton were unknown to me till I had begun to write the treatise. It was then too late to study them completely or minutely; but I derived great assistance in some of the following Chapters from the notes and dissertations in the edition of Reid. The references to the "Discussions" of the same illustrious writer have been recently added. They ought to have been more numerous.

I have been careful to mark the instances in which I was conscious of being under obligations to former writers. It will appear, however, that in many cases where similar thoughts have been quoted in the margin, confirmatory of those advanced in the text, the arguments of the Treatise have not, in fact, been suggested by the passages referred to. The quotations from Leibnitz, Des Cartes, and Malebranche have all been added since the work was in the hands of the Judges, my previous acquaintance with these writers having been limited to second-hand information.

The Title of the work arose in the course of the inquiry. In the examination of atheistic systems, in the former part, it was found requisite often to use the opposite word *Theism*. In considering the Scriptural Revelation of the Divine Character, it appeared that *the Theism of Christianity* required to be distinguished from mere natural Theism. Hence the Title, *Christian Theism*. The same Title is assumed by a work quoted in the following pages. But it is there misapplied. A system which regards the Savior of mankind as no more than one of many wise men, who

have set forth the worship of the One True God, and the Bible as not superior, in authority, to other books, can have no right to take the name of Christian.

In the opinion of the Judges, that all the Treatises were "greatly capable of improvement," so far as regards the present Treatise, I fully concur. Since their judgment was given, it has undergone a thorough revision, and now more nearly approaches to what I should have wished it to be, had time permitted, before it was placed in their hands. The alterations, however, are not such as to change, in any respect, the general character of the work. They are nearly all alterations of manner rather than of matter. The chief exception is in Book III., chapters ii. and iii.; the first of which has been considerably enlarged, and the second, on the Plurality of Worlds, is entirely new. But even the latter chapter is an expansion of a passage which occurs toward the end of Book II. This addition has been suggested chiefly by the opinion of the Judges, that the physical part of the argument had been too much overlooked. I had passed it over, thinking it had been fully discussed by numerous and more competent writers.

I may also take this opportunity of expressing my obligation to Mr. Rogers for some valuable observations, which have directed my attention to some other topics of the work. But, on the whole, it remains as it was written, a work of solitude, and must have many errors, which need the indulgent consideration of the reader. I hope, however, they are but minor errors, which will not invalidate the main arguments, nor bring into question any important conclusions. But there are truths, of which the mind may have a deeper conviction, than of any argument by which they can be established.

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CHRISTIAN THEISM.

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CHAPTER I.

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1. THE subject of the present work is one, which, in some form or other, has excited the attention of every man who has entered into the possession of his birth-right as an intelligent being. Few may have considered it deeply, none can have exhausted it; but the man has not lived, at least as man, to whom the question has never presented itself in some form—"What am I, and what is this marvelous universe to which I belong?" If the inquiry be not pursued reflectively, yet in some feeling at least, however vague, it perpetually recurs—"Whence am I; whither do I go; and what is the cause and the purpose of my existence here?"

These questions constitute the great problem of human thought, till the timid inferences of reason are confirmed by the discoveries of revelation. Not but that both in man and nature the testimonies abound to the sublime truth—THERE IS ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL; but they are perceived with difficulty and doubt, till human reasonings are confirmed by a Voice which we can know to be from God.

It is a truth which belongs to philosophy as well as to theology; to philosophy as an ultimate conclusion, to theology as a fundamental truth. Natural theology has its origin in the constitution of the mind, with its innate powers and tendencies. Even revelation must be void of meaning, unless with reference to an intelligent mind. For as colors are nothing, unless to a certain constitution of the eye and nerve through which they are perceived; as a moral law is nothing, without an inward moral sense to appreciate its distinctions and to be subject to its judgments; so revelation is unfounded and unmeaning, unless to a mind which can understand and estimate its evidences, and can form the conception of a Supreme Being.

Such a mind must possess faculties and capacities for general speculation and research: and of all the questions which can engage the thoughts, it is at once the most interesting and the most momentous — whether That Great Being, whom we are accustomed to regard as the First Cause and Abiding Principle of all things; the first anticipation of ignorance, the highest result of philosophy; the Beginning of existence, the End of thought; the Lord of creation, the Father of mankind; the Hope of the righteous, the Dread of the ungodly; whether That Being do really exist, as it is unquestionable that these thoughts of Him are perpetually recurring to the mind.

2. It might seem, on a slight attention, that a question of so much interest and importance, one which has been discussed during so many ages, must before this have been probed to its centre, and examined in every form it can assume. But human thought is progressive. Ever unable of itself to comprehend the problems of existence, it can expect no more than through many devious wanderings, and the frequent recurrence of errors, to approximate continually to the truth. The being of God can never, like a geometrical proposition, be brought within the compass of our faculties. If we believe that He exists, we may anticipate that His nature must be unsearchable. We can not know Him as He is: we must see Him in His works of power within us and without us. If we acknowledge Him to be the Creator of all, we may *look for manifestations* of His action throughout the whole crea-

tion. The self-existent Being must be the ground of all existence, and even of the possibility of existence. He must be the Creator of matter in its most elementary form; the Disposer of its properties and powers; the Ordainer of its laws and adaptations; the Originator and Author, whether by transient or continued action, of all its revolutions and developments from the first act of creation, however simple, to the last result of existence, however complex. We may look then for indications of His action, and may perhaps find traces of His presence, not only in those designs and adaptations which secure the harmony and stability of the universe, but also in the properties of its most insignificant parts; not only in a vast and varied world, but in a stone one might kick in crossing a heath. The stone which Paley passes by, may tell a more wondrous story than the watch that he picks up. Its structure may contain the record of slow changes or sudden convulsions, which took place at some distant part of the earth, ages before the existence of our race. But the mind may go beyond its structure to its varied properties, chemical, mineralogical, and others, and from these to its bare existence as matter, and, unless content to rest in ignorance, can refer them to the agency of an unchanging and eternal God.

But the field of creation is widely extended, when we take account of its living and intelligent beings. The exhaustless wonders of organization, the numberless adaptations which must concur for the preservation of a single living being, much more for that of many individuals and many kinds; above all, the nature of man as a being of thought and feeling; the original constitution of his mind; the laws of his existence, growth, and development; his powers, primary motives, and fundamental conceptions; his innate dispositions and unavoidable feelings and aspirations; the effects of his life in the world; the moral law in its origin, its action, and its meaning; these subjects and others open out every one of them a new field, where we may look for the footsteps of the Creator. His work will certainly remain in all, His presence may be discoverable, and perhaps His action abiding. All must be searched to exhaust the field of natural theology. Some of them will engage our attention in this essay, not that we may con-

struct new proofs of the being of God, but that we may examine the evidence which lies before us, and interpret His revelation of Himself.

Since, then, this evidence is to be sought in universal nature, and in the constitution of the mind; and since knowledge is continually increased, and the study of ourselves the most intricate and difficult in which we can engage; it follows that no human intellect or progress can ever exhaust the subject, or exhibit its evidences in their fullness.

3. The difficulty is much increased, when we take account of the disturbing causes of human judgment. The love of knowledge, and the fascination of systems, sometimes lead the inquirer to transgress the natural limits of his faculties, to build upon groundless assumptions, and to mistake partial views for the whole truth. Various theories of existence, each involving its peculiar speculations, and resulting in its peculiar form of unbelief, have been from time to time current in the world. Moral obliquities are a still more prevalent source of error. It is the interest of the wicked man—at least he is apt to think so—that there shall be no God; and men easily believe what they wish to be true. On the other hand, it is not without example that the false show of religion in nominal Christians who are practical atheists, may lead more honest, though perhaps sensitive and hasty minds, to treat as a delusion a belief which is manifestly insincere.

Such considerations of the ignorance and imperfection of human nature, may account for the various and inconsistent theories of atheism which have deceived or amused the world. Every imaginable system would seem to have had its advocates. It has been attempted by theories of dead matter, and of living matter, and of a senseless, inanimate God, to supersede the doctrine of the living God. Positive atheism has often tried its atomic and its hylozoic theories, with chance or necessity for its deity. It has deified the universe, and assumed the more imposing name of pantheism. Negative atheism professes to acquiesce in unavoidable skepticism respecting the causes and the purpose of existence, denying all knowledge of the First Cause, and affirming it to be impossible.

4. *Theists also* are ill agreed upon their proofs and evidences,

and even upon the principles by which they are to be ascertained. Unbelief is organized and active: new objections are raised, and old objections furbished; novel systems are set up, or theories long since confuted are revived; infidel publications are circulated, some of them acute and eloquent, and, however erroneous in speculation, yet, in some respects, not untruthful to human nature; while there is no more concurrence among Christians respecting the foundations of natural religion, than among the various systems of unbelief.

Nothing is more certain to retard the progress of truth, than to recommend it by doubtful evidences, and inconsequent proofs. This remark applies to the celebrated *a priori* proof, as it is called, of Dr. Samuel Clarke, or at least that part of it which rests on the "ideas of infinity and eternity." The whole "demonstration" has had a traditionary fame far beyond its merits, and this portion of the argument has received the pleasant animadversion of Dr. Reid: "Space and time, he thought, are only abstract or partial conceptions of an immensity and eternity which forces itself upon our belief. And as immensity and eternity are not substances, they must be the attributes of a Being who is necessarily immense and eternal. These," says Dr. Reid, "are the speculations of men of superior genius, but whether they be as solid as they are sublime, or whether they be the wanderings of imagination in a region beyond the limits of human understanding, I am unable to determine."[1]

Mr. Stewart has an observation on this proof to the same effect, and Lord Brougham believes that hardly any person has ever been at all satisfied with it. Their remarks are turned to account by an atheistic writer[2] of the day, who considers the fate of Dr. Clarke's and all *a priori* labors to be sealed, and hastily concludes that the argument from design is all that is left to natural theology.

All the arguments of Dr. Clarke lose the force which may belong to them intrinsically, in consequence of the uncertainty of his *method*. It is impossible to establish the great truth of the Being of God on a firm basis, without investigating the principles

[1] Sir W. Hamilton's Reid, p. 343.

[2] Mr. Holyoake.

of reason and the limits of knowledge, and examining the procedure of the mind in its acquirement of truth. So far was Clarke from such an undertaking, that they who have examined his writings, can hardly doubt that he was indebted to Spinoza for the best parts of his work. Had he enunciated the Cartesian principle, which was assumed by Spinoza, that all clear and distinct ideas are representative of truth,[1] he might have avoided the common pitfall of philosophers in the confusion between the notions of the mind and the realities external to it. As it is, his famed "demonstration" is more ostentatious than conclusive, and his confutation of Spinoza only to be appreciated by those who have read it immediately after the ethics of that celebrated pantheist.

Similar observations apply to other proofs which are sometimes alleged, such as those which appeal to our innate faculties, or to a distinct religious faculty or intuition, without due examination of the mental constitution. It must be possible to estimate the weight of arguments, and the validity of conceptions, and to ascertain, on the question before us, how far, and on what conditions, we may look for the exactness of demonstration. If strict proof be impossible, we may expect that it can be shown to be impossible, and may see good reason to be satisfied without it. If we have moral reasons and practical proofs, we may perhaps know them to be such as the case admits of, and may find them to be as convincing on this subject as exact demonstration in geometry. If the atheist demand a proof which will silence and defy objection, he can not be answered without the previous question, "What proof is possible? what demonstration will be a defiance?"

5. The celebrated and popular argument from final causes has not, in this country at least, received that examination of its principles which its importance demands. Volumes have been devoted to its illustration; paragraphs have sufficed for the survey of its philosophical foundations, and the settling of its legitimate extent in the domain of knowledge. This work, however, though

[1] This principle is commonly called Des Cartes', but was "nothing new" in him.—Sir William Hamilton on Reid, p. 376.

dry and uninteresting to many readers, is no less necessary than the former. Without it reason may be amused, but is not enriched; precisely as a man may be interested by adding field to field, and estate to estate, in a paper plan, or by beautiful views and pleasant walks over the cultivated country, but is none the richer, till the surface has been surveyed, and the boundary marked out, and the dry and technical language of title-deeds has settled it to be his own. Even theists are but little agreed upon the argument from final causes. Some regard it as strictly demonstrative of all that reason can discover of a Creator. Others receive it with hesitation, as the best proof which is to be had; uncertain why it is the best, and regretting the absence of a better. Others have heard that "it begs the very question which skeptics dispute," and are almost ready to resign it. The atheist seizes the occasion to make it the butt of his sarcasm, and to represent it as the resource of dullness and ignorance.

Another instance of this uncertainty occurs in the question of the relations of natural theology to revelation. Some writers are of opinion that natural theology can never of itself demonstrate the existence of God; others are no less confident, that even revelation must be without ground or meaning, till this preliminary truth has been established.

6. On these and similar fundamental questions, it is not too much to expect that the united efforts of Christian writers will at length establish principles, which will command general assent, if not with others, at least among themselves. To attempt the investigation of such principles, is to enter upon a very difficult field of labor—that of the limits of reason. For most of the difficulties which have been indicated depend upon the limits of the faculties, and are to be set at rest, not so much by investigating *what we may know*, as by inquiring *why we may know no more*.

To attempt the determination of these limits—to seek to ascertain the extent of knowledge and the validity of the mind's inferences and inductions, is an arduous undertaking—one which must expose us to the charge of presumption; especially where it shall be found, that, after professing to expose the errors, and repudiate the systems of others, we have fallen into similar mistakes.

But the fear of failure ought not to repress endeavor; nor can it be a just reproach to have confidence in the progress of knowledge. The allegation of skepticism that philosophy has been fruitless, is much overstated, and profound thinkers have expressed the belief, that careful thought will lead at length to results of universal authority and reception. This must be the work of many, and the result of time. It will repay all labor, and deserves the ambition of a life, to make some progress in this direction. It is due to the expectations of that good man, no less wise than munificent, who looked onward to future ages, and, solicitous for the permanence of truth, provided by his will that false theories, which are constantly springing up, should be met, every forty years, by new efforts in its defense; it is due to him, that the candidate for his honors shall aim to meet the exigencies of the times, if not to advance the course of inquiry toward the final suppression of error, and the universal prevalence of truth and goodness.

7. A double purpose is proposed by the present essay. The first, to answer the objections of atheists and deists, and to examine the foundations of the true doctrine of the Supreme Being; the second, to awaken a deeper and more abiding sense of His being and presence. We have to show that it is no delusion, but a reasonable faith, to think Him ever near us, though unseen; to see him by His agency in all things; to believe that all things are full of God. Every perception, and thought, and feeling; every object of the visible universe; the face of nature in the harmonious order of its unchanging laws, as well as in its apparent perturbations and convulsions; the fleeting clouds, the fitful volcano, "the everlasting hills," the infinitesimal uniformity of the daily period; the bursting storm, the swift meteor of a moment, and the planetary inequalities of a myriad years; the pictured landscape, the waste howling wilderness, the sandy desert; the infinite ocean, in the appalling fury of its tempest, and in the majestic dignity of its calm; all nature, in its minuteness and in its vastness; the millions of living things in air, earth, and water, and "the majestical roof fretted with golden fire;" the living dust *of the earth,* and the starry dust of the skies, whose minutest grains

are systems of worlds; the boulder of the roadside, the huge volcanic moon, and this varied globe of the world, records, all of them, of the physical agencies of countless ages; and yet more than all, man in his frame, his powers, his feelings—"man, noble in reason, infinite in faculties, in form and moving so express and admirable;" the unnumbered fitnesses of his material dwelling, so "fearfully and wonderfully made;" the affections and aspirations of the soul; the spirit that, spurning at meanness, and never stooping to low selfishness and cunning, directs to the INFINITE AND ETERNAL ONE its desire of perfection, its hope of immortality, and sees, and loves, and adores in God, the ever-flowing fountain of goodness and holiness; man, individually and in society; every circumstance of life, every event of history; the decay or the development, the fears or the hopes of the individual and of the race—all things discover the presence or the work of God; all, except the blight of evil, and even this in its history and results; all things are full of God, all reveal the present God.

We are to investigate the reasons of this belief—reasons which, before examination, have their influence on the mind. The still, small voice of the Creator may be heard within the soul, though formal proofs may be unknown. Deeper than logic, and prior to it, is the truth that God exists—the assurance that the Lord of creation is the universal Parent of mankind; that to the devout and guileless soul He is the Friend in life, the Protector in death, the Hope and Happiness of the long, long future.

CHAPTER II.

OF TERMS AND METHOD. MODERN SYSTEMS.

1. The Sacred Name.—The word "Exist."—Dependent Existence.—Independent Existence.—Underived Being.—2. Question of Method.—3. Cartesian Principle.—4. Conceptions of Space and Time.—5. Ontology rests on Psychology.—6. Existence of One's Self and of the World.—7. Supposed Dangers of Speculation.—8. Modern Philosophical Systems.—Locke's System.—9. Berkeley's Idealism.—10. Hume's Skepticism.—11. Scottish School.—12. Kant.—13. Later German Systems.

1. It may be anticipated that the mind is incapable of forming any adequate notion of that great Being whom it designates by the sacred name. But it may attach to the name certain definite though inadequate conceptions. The name of a man will recall him to remembrance in certain characteristics by which he is known, whether of appearance, or manner, or perhaps of some work or action, if we have never seen him; although these can furnish a very partial description of his nature or character. We may thus think of the Supreme Being as one all-powerful, wise, and good, by whom every thing exists. Whatever mysteries may lie hid in the depths of that eternal nature, these words as easily convey to the mind the notion of a real Being, as any other partial and imperfect conceptions can convey that of a living man. It is to be shown that this inward conception of the mind is an expression of outward truth—that such a Being really exists.

The word *is*, or *exists*, may be used in very different senses. Its ambiguity was the source of the early controversy on Berkeley's theory of matter. It was used in one sense by himself, in another by the critics who desired him to test his theory by throwing himself down a precipice. In questions of philosophy serious errors may arise from the ambiguity of common words.

We shall therefore take the word *exist*, in its most extended signification, to express all being, real or apparent, without regard

to the source or manner of existence. According to Berkeley, the existence of matter is nothing real in itself, but depends upon the continued existence and agency of mind. It exists as the agency of the Supreme Being, and as apparent to the minds of men. This, then, may be called *dependent existence;* and it may be defined generally, that the existence of A is dependent on that of B, when it is such that it would necessarily cease with that of B.

In this sense of the word it may be said that the figures of a dream exist. In whatever manner they arise, they exist as affections of the sleeper's mind; they have an existence dependent on his own. Such, according to Kant, is the only existence which the pure reason, independently of the practical reason or moral nature of man, can attribute to the Supreme Being. Mere reason, he maintains, can not possibly ascertain the real objective existence of the Supreme Being. Its God is only an ideal of its own.

The existence of A may be said to be *independent*, when it has no present dependence on any other being. This may also be called absolute existence. We may imagine an eternal succession of finite beings, of which each individual is derived from a preceding one, but is independent during its continuance, and vanishes in virtue of laws which have been derived along with its existence, but afterward act within itself. This is a conceivable atheistic system, and has had its advocates. Or the theist may hold the independent existence of created beings. It is *conceivable* that their existence may have been communicated by a single creative act, and may continue through the efficiency of that past act, and in the energy of life imparted once for all. This like every other theory has found supporters.

These, it is evident, are distinctions of the internal notions of the mind, and must not be assumed to correspond to things without. A third conception remains, that of a Being who is not only independent but *underived*.[1] This is infinite being. It is that existence of which the sole cause and reality rest in the Being Him-

[1] I had employed the word *absolute* in this sense, and have transferred it, to be in conformity with the usage of Sir W. Hamilton, Discussions, p. 13. Dependent Being is sometimes called Conditioned; Independent or Absolute, and Underived or Infinite Being, are both Unconditioned.

self, independent of any previous or superior being. Such, without question, is the existence which our thesis attributes to the Creator. The sacred name designates a Being by whom all things exist—not only all things which now are, but whatever have been, are, or shall be. We are to understand Him to be one, whose being is neither the sum of the existences of finite beings, nor any development nor relation of the things which compose the visible universe, but is independent of finite things, and superior to them, and the Cause of them. He is such that finite created beings like men are no parts of His nature, and in no way essential to Him. Whatever may be hid in the depths of His eternal nature, whatever may be the power of creation, whatever the dependence of the world upon Him, He is in no way dependent upon it, but the Creator and supreme Lord of the universe.

2. In inquiries respecting existence, the first important question which presents itself is that of METHOD. This question relates to the fundamental principles to be assumed, and the plan to be followed in building upon them. Some first principles must be assumed. Every physical movement must be referred to something fixed; every mover must have a stand-point. The movements of mind are subject to the same necessity. The want of a standing-place is the difficulty of Des Cartes,[1] as well as of Archimedes. Whatever be the direction of thought, whether it deduce the logical consequences of given premises, or investigate the reality of things, it must always advance from the known to the unknown. The mathematician starts from his self-evident axioms and definitions; the logician, from his premises; the natural philosopher, from the observed phenomena of nature, and the common notions of *law* and *cause;* and the validity of their conclusions depends upon that of their assumptions. Every inquiry into existence, whether of the world, the soul, or God, must proceed, in like manner, from the known to the unknown.

3. What then can we assume as known in the present inquiry? Shall we assume with Des Cartes, that every clear and distinct conception is objectively true,[2] and that the idea of God is of this kind? Then our work is short and our inference rapid. But we

[1] Med. ii.

[2] Discours de la Méthode, iv. Med. iii.

are open to the question—What warrant have you for assuming that your inward conceptions correspond to outward realities? Suppose it granted that the mind of man forms a clear and distinct conception of a Supreme Being; suppose, what can scarcely be questioned, that the laws of the mind naturally evolve the conception of the Infinite; yet what answer shall we make to Kant,[1] the most profound of inquirers, when he tells us that this ideal is but a regulative principle of the understanding, and is objectively void?

4. Or shall we take our stand, with Clarke, on the infinite conceptions of space and time, and infer from these the existence of an infinite Being, of whose nature they are determinations or attributes? Here again the same great critic would meet us with his demand—What are space and time, but pure forms of the intuition, that is "the subjective condition of sensibility under which alone external intuition is possible to us?" By demanding what we can know of them as objective, he sends us back to the examination of our powers and processes of thought.

5. Thus we are not permitted to take the short method of resting our knowledge of God, without inquiry, on some original faculty of the mind, whether faith, or feeling, or intuition, or inspiration, or by whatever name it may be called. It is possible that the judge to whom we thus appeal may be fully authorized and competent; it is probable that the universal religious feeling of mankind has its seat in an original intuition of the soul. But the atheist calls it a delusion, or a sense which sees things that do not exist. Such is his answer to a claim of intellectual discernment, which involves the charge of intellectual blindness against himself. The claim will be demanded its credentials, and must be ready to give proof of its pretensions.

It seems then that we may be led into abstruse investigations, which many may not have the patience to pursue. But there is no alternative. The least thought may show, that we are very little beside the vastness of nature, and can ever see but a little way. We can not expect the glance of intuition to pierce the

[1] Kant's Kritik der Rein. Vern. Rosenkranz' Ed. 1838, p. 73. Heywood's Transl. p. 27.

mysteries of being to the First Cause and principle of all things. If our minds could embrace the universe, and there were no height nor depth beyond our reach, one proof might be enough; one look might penetrate to the source of life, and so unvail to us the First Cause, or principle, or the totality of all things, that we should be able to make the beginning of being the beginning also of thought, and the order of nature the order also of the mental procedure. We need not then go back from consequences to causes, nor seek for agencies in their effects; we should need no *induction*, but should *deduce*, in its natural order, the knowledge of whatever is, and should supersede the laborious work of collecting facts and observing things as they are, by the easier intuition of what they must be.

But this is not the method of human knowledge. No such royal road has been found. "Nothing without labor" is still the universal law; it grasps every pursuit, not less the intellectual than the material, the moral, or the religious; and the undertaking which claims to be exempt gives beforehand the certain omen of its failure.

Locke has some fine observations, in the introductory chapter of his Essay, on the importance of ascertaining the powers of the mind. "It is of great use to the sailor," he says, "to know the length of his line." Without question all knowledge of being must rest on knowledge of the mind—all ontology on psychology. Every inquirer must begin by measuring the length of his line; at least as soon as he shall have assured himself that he has a firm stand-point at the surface and a line to throw.

6. In examining the nature of the mind, and its procedure in the discovery of the Supreme Mind, we must consider our knowledge of the *self* or *soul*, and of the *external world*, before we can examine our higher knowledge of the Deity. To begin with the doubt of Des Cartes and his famous "*Cogito ergo sum*,"[1] "*My thoughts manifest my existence*," would be to incur with him the implacable ridicule of superficialness. And, as Hume observed, it would be vain and frivolous to discuss, as if it could be thought

[1] Discours iv. And Augustine de Civ. Dei xi. 26. "Certum est esse me, si fallor . . . ."

doubtful, the existence of the outward world. But it is a very important question, how we know it to exist, and how we come to distinguish the mind from the world, the self from the not-self, the *ego* from the *non ego*. Some of the most imposing systems of unbelief adopt the notion of a deity inseparable from the world. Others confuse the notions of the soul and God, or both these notions with that of matter. Christian theism maintains that God is distinct from the universe and from man, though not apart from them, superior to them in nature and essence, though omnipresent. It may turn out that our knowledge of a personal God rests on the same principles, or is necessarily implied in that of an outward world. This prior question then must have an important bearing on our subject.

Suppose the inquirer to commence with the affirmation of his existence, whether it be assumed, or inferred from the undeniable facts of present consciousness, in which it is implied; still the question arises, What is the meaning of this *sum, I am, I exist?* Does it mean, I exist of myself, or in another being? independent or dependent? Am I such in my existence, that, if I could now follow up any perception to its ultimate conditions, or trace back any act of my will to its inchoation, or direct my attention along the stream of life to its source—is my existence such, that that act of perception, or will, or that stream of life, would be found to have its termination in myself, without connection or dependence upon any other being? May I assume, in short, the distinct personal existence of the soul with a will originating in itself? If so his work will be simplified; he will have gained a firm standing-place for the commencement of his inquiries. From the manifest power of the assumed will to originate change or motion, he will be led to ascribe those stupendous changes and motions of nature, which so far exceed the powers of man, to a will immensely superior to his own, and this will to an Infinite Mind.

But his philosophy will be open to question from many quarters, and an active teacher of atheism brings the objection to bear upon his theology: "If a man discern within himself no first principle of movement, he of course needs none out of himself. If in his own actions he sees no marks of (what others call) will,

why should he see them in nature? This is precisely the case with the atheist."[1]

7. The theist is thus challenged to examine the grounds of his doctrine. It is one which no inquiry can unsettle, no scrutiny can invalidate. Speculative researches, like all other pursuits, have their dangers; but it is impossible without them to know what is within or without the province of reason, or to meet the exigencies of thought on the great truth of theology. The limits of knowledge, it has been truly said, are likely to lie where we grow weary of thinking farther. If, as some affirm, our natural faculties are fitted for no knowledge but of phenomena; if the senses be our first and only guides, and we must rest satisfied with the information they afford us; still some inquiry is necessary to convince us of our hopeless ignorance, and that we may cease the vain attempt to transgress the narrow limits of man's domain. This conclusion, we need scarcely say, would deny to unaided reason all knowledge of a Supreme Being, and would go far, if pressed to the extreme, to take away all meaning from revelation. It would leave us in desolate skepticism, without God, without purpose in life. Such is the design of the atheist when he interdicts the highest application of the faculties, and would confine us to the knowledge of the senses.

Natural theology rests on principles, which are equally competent to establish its truth, and to expose the sophisms of unbelief. The depths of speculation can not be more dangerous to the theist than to the atheist. They may seem for a time to throw up noxious vapors, which obscure the atmosphere of truth; but the vapors will pass away, and the foundations will have been deeper laid. To have confidence in God, is to believe that no region to which thought may penetrate can be dangerous by the Divine appointment. Man's successes are by many failures. He is very liable to err, and may be bewildered by unseen influences, whether he walk the surface, or descend to the caverns of the earth; but God does not deal so hardly with him, his condition is not so pitiable, as that to think much must involve him in error and uncertainty. He may think and err, but he must think again. It

[1] Mr. Holyoake.

is not credible that "the field of religious ideas, when it is trodden by the foot of natural reason, is only a field of problems and contradictions." Granted that philosophical investigations, "when eagerly and incautiously pursued, lead to the most terrible doubts," yet the danger is much exaggerated, when we are told that "this is the experience of all the systems of all the schools in every age of the world;"[1] and if it were so, yet the stagnant marsh of ignorance is more pernicious than the clash of conflicting theories. Reason may mislead; and what may not? But till we see men pluck out the eye of sense because it offends, we may doubt whether it be the fear of error that leads them to pluck out the eye of the soul. If God be the Creator of man, and reason the faculty which distinguishes man from the brutes, then reason has its appointed work, in the individual, and in the race. Even its errors have evolved truth, and its strangest vagaries will end in establishing it the more firmly. Is it not a plain dictate of natural religion, one to be more widely recognized, that to develop the powers of the soul, and give them their proper application, is a first duty to the Creator; and that there can be no worse imputation upon His wisdom than to mistrust His best gifts, and wrap them away unemployed in a napkin? Next to His Divine Presence—essential even with this—reason is the highest talent which God has committed to His children. It is not to be admitted that He has bestowed a good gift, yet made it impossible to employ it safely; or communicated faculties and powers, which can not be used without plunging us in error and uncertainty.

8. The history of philosophy, to the most recent times, is often represented as an arena of debates and failures. Speculative inquiries are not to be evaded, by assuming the result of any system as received. Yet need we not, on this account, either despair of philosophy, or regard the great truth of theology as hanging in uncertainty, till philosophers have agreed upon their principles. It is but recently, in its lifetime of six thousand years, that the world has discovered the true theory of the mechanical laws of dead matter. A longer period may well be requisite, for tracing the more intricate movements of living mind. But the material

[1] Vinet's Vital Christianity, chap. I.

motions of the universe were performed with the nicest exactness, though unobserved; and the mind too has its laws, not so simple perhaps and comprehensive as those of matter, but no less stable and binding; and the souls of men have been attracted, when they least observed it, by an influence from the Source of Life. In discovering to man the existence of the soul, the world, and the Creator, nature has taught him better than he can teach himself. The knowledge of a Supreme Being may be as universal and as valid, though equally difficult to follow by reflection to its first principles, as that of the more immediate objects of apprehension. Man may know by the teaching of nature: he can not know that he knows without reflection. He needs philosophy to estimate the value of his cognitions, and to give them currency.

The theory which has been most generally prevalent in Britain, is that which finds the origin of all knowledge in sensation. It may be summed up in the old dogma—"*Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu.*" There is nothing in the understanding but what has come through sensation. Locke is generally regarded as the founder of this school, but cannot be held responsible for all its extravagances. He assumes the existence of the mind as distinct from the world, and possessed of a capacity for receiving ideas or impressions, which represent the truth of things without. These ideas are considered to be *representations*, or images of objects perceived, and are derived from them in the act of perception. Experience is assumed as an ultimate fact. Investigation is made indeed of the various *occasions* on which the different ideas arise in experience, but no inquiry is instituted into its nature, and no account is given of its process. The mind possesses nothing innate but the ability to learn. It is likened to a sheet of white paper on which various characters may be written, but which has no disposition to receive one impression rather than another. It has, no doubt, an inward experience, but this is only the perception of its own operations, which, on the pure theory of sensation, can inform it of nothing beyond itself.[1] It is open to whatever instruction it may receive.

[1] At this point the system of Locke is unsettled. If the knowledge attained be, in part, dependent for its character on the "faculties fit to attain it;" if "the operations of the mind" contribute to its formation in a fixed

For the reception of knowledge, and even for the formation of the faculties, every thing depends upon observation and education. It does not even possess fixed moral principles, but may be led with like facility toward good or evil, toward virtue or toward vice.

The results of this representation philosophy are well known. Since the mind is cognizant only of its own ideas, it possesses no voucher for their objective meaning. Knowledge is defined to consist in a conformity between the ideas and the reality of things; but, while nothing can be known of the reality except through the idea, there can be no comparison of the one with the other, nor any means of ascertaining that there is any conceivable resemblance between them. It would have been impossible therefore to be assured that any object exists out of the mind itself, had not Locke diverged at this point from the general direction of his system.

9. The idealism of Berkeley (and Collier) was an easy deduction from the doctrine of representation. This system denied the existence of the material world, except as a Divine representation to the human mind. All we see in the world, the appearances and properties, the laws and relations of things, which we combine under the word *matter*, are only certain effects produced on the mind according to certain laws and by the immediate action of the Deity,[1] and have no existence in themselves independently of mind. This is a consistent and intelligible theory, and can in no way affect the ordinary relations of life in the world. It may perhaps be shown to be improbable, or inconsistent with the

and certain way, the system is no longer one of pure sensation. Such is the purport of many passages of Locke, and would, no doubt, have been his opinion at the present day. But the general tendency of the essay appears to be in the opposite direction, till he is obliged, on different principles, to establish his knowledge of the world and of the Supreme Being. All that can be said in defense of Locke will be found in Mr. Rogers's Article, Ed. Rev. April, 1854. Essays, vol. iii.

[1] Berkeley's Principles of Human Knowledge — § iii. "The absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation to their being perceived, seems perfectly unintelligible. Their *esse* is *percipi*." § xxix. "There is some other will or spirit that produces them," for "they have no dependence on my will." § xxxiii. "They are imprinted on the senses by the Author of Nature." § xxx. "The set rules or established methods, wherein the mind we depend on excites in us the ideas of sense, are called the laws of nature."

necessary principles of knowledge, and therefore unphilosophical. But no reasoning can confute it, nor prove it to be impossible in the nature of things. It is quite conceivable that our life in the world may be not a reality, but a dream, of which the figures and visions are represented, according to certain rules and unchanging laws, by the agency of a Superior Being. The truthfulness of that Being assures us that these laws will be in that constant relation to the actions of man's will, which is essential to the purposes, especially the moral purposes, of life. But no appeal to the truth of God or the common sense[1] of mankind can wholly set aside the pretensions of the idealist; much less can he be answered, as has been soberly imagined, by kicking a stone, or desiring him to throw himself down a precipice—practical arguments, which are decisive enough of a certain relation between the human body and a hard stone, but discover nothing of the essential nature of either of them.

10. But idealism is generally believed to have found a more dangerous antagonist in its own legitimate offspring. It is often represented to have found its *reductio ad absurdum* in the skepticism of David Hume. This celebrated man has been the author, indirectly, of all modern philosophy; for Kant in Germany, and Reid at home, both acknowledged that he had awakened them to their speculations; and in these two all later systems have had their origin. Hume is commonly said to have advanced the one fatal step beyond Berkeley, and to have had the satisfaction of throwing down a precipice all who held the doctrine of representative ideas. The yawning gulf of total skepticism became the grave of idealism. Material substance in Locke is nothing but an unknown support of qualities. Berkeley could find no reason why that which is unknown should be considered to exist, and allowed no existence except that of God and created spirits, but neither of them thought of questioning the existence of the soul. Berkeley denied the existence of matter, but, "as became his order," says Reid, "was unwilling to give up the world of spirits.

[1] The term *common sense* is here used in its vulgar acceptation of an unreflective judgment. It receives a philosophical meaning in Sir W. Hamilton, and sometimes in Reid.

Mr. Hume shows no such partiality for spirits."[1] It was his honor, if such it be deemed, to question the being of both soul and world, and to leave us nothing but a world of ideas and impressions.

Such is the common account of the progress of philosophy, or rather its fruitless efforts, previously to the time of Reid and Kant. Locke and Berkeley were the giants of an old world which perished in Hume's deluge.[2] The new world has ever since been laboring to reconstruct itself from the ruins, and to find some safer foundation for its speculative edifices.

We shall have occasion to show that this account is substantially neither true nor fair, and that Hume's skepticism was not a legitimate deduction from Locke and Berkeley. These philosophers possessed, in fact, and distinctly enunciated the only possible principle of all philosophy or common sense—a principle which by Hume was unceremoniously disowned and set aside, and which is not more clearly vindicated in Reid, far less so in Kant, than in those who preceded Hume.

11. The Scottish recoil from the skepticism of Hume will be found to have brought back principles of the greatest value in natural theology. But they are nowhere formally applied by Reid or his successors, nor carried out to their most important results. This school, it has been said, has given us rather a preparation for philosophy than a philosophy itself.

12. The celebrated system of the great German philosopher will demand a somewhat longer notice; for it was extended to the criticism of all knowledge, whether of the soul, the world, or God; and has given rise indirectly to many theories both religious and philosophical.

Kant's philosophy was the other recoil from the extreme skepticism of Hume. To construct a barrier against its sweeping conclusions, he re-examines the first principles of cognition, and reverts to that which derives all knowledge from the senses. This assumption needs qualification. Undoubtedly all knowledge be-

[1] Works, p. 293.

[2] "The Treatise of Human Nature drowned all in one universal deluge." Reid, p. 103. This coincidence is accidental.

gins with experience, but it does not on this account all arise out of experience. It may be a compound of that which is derived from sensation, with another element from the mind itself, and this is not empirical but innate.

It is a fact that we do possess cognitions which can not have come from experience. Experience can never furnish us with judgments which are *necessarily* and *universally* valid; such, for instance, as the axioms of mathematics, and the principle, *all change must have a cause*. It is therefore assumed that these judgments must have their origin in the mind itself, and the Critique of Pure Reason contains a profound investigation of the innate, original principles[1] of the mind. There is nothing in the results of his investigation but what might have been anticipated from his original principle, that that part of all knowledge which has not come through the senses has been contributed by the mind from itself.[2] It is evident that, although we may find in the understanding a ground for the pure knowledge of the subjective self, that is of the mind, as it is manifested to itself in the facts of consciousness, yet we can not by this means gain any knowledge of things really existing external to the mind. We gain a *subjective*, not an *objective* knowledge. For this we are still as much dependent upon experience as before. Science is confined to the subjective field by the very principles of the system.

After applying his principles to our conceptions of the soul and of the world, and having shown that inquiries respecting their nature had been pressed beyond the limits of possible knowledge—that, by an unavoidable illusion, the mind mistakes appearances for things, he goes on to examine the proofs then current of the existence of the Supreme Being. "The theological idea" shares the fate of the others. It is found to be nothing more than an inevitable product of the mind, useful and necessary as a regulative principle of thought, but a mere empty conception, without ob-

[1] *Pure*, or *à priori conceptions* or *categories*, as they are called. The whole work, but especially this part of it, may probably be thought by most readers far more obscure than it need have been.

[2] According to the principle of Leibnitz (founded on that of former philosophers), "Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu, nisi ipse intellectus." Leib. Op. Phil. Erdman's Ed. 1840, p. 180, 223.

jective signification, because experience can not furnish it with matter from without. Reason gains the ideal from itself, but "in vain expands its wings to rise above the sensible world by the mere force of speculation."

Scientific knowledge then became impossible; but it was the result of the critique, that every system of dogmatic unbelief perished along with it. Such subjects admit of no strict proof on either side. Kant would have us satisfied to know that beyond ourselves we can know nothing. "He made himself," says Madame de Staël, "so deeply learned in the science of being, only to demonstrate its own insufficiency: like a new Curtius, he threw himself into the gulf of abstraction, in order to fill it up."[1] He professed, by destroying science, to make room for belief.[2] We must be satisfied with something short of demonstration, and it remains to inquire, whether we may not still have ground for practical faith. These investigations do not bear on this part of our subject: suffice it to say, that Kant is a philosophical, not a theological skeptic; and finds in the moral nature of man the evidences of God, of freedom, and of immortality.

It was the aim of his "pure reason," to check the inroads of skepticism; but it is now admitted that he opened the way to a more formidable system than that of Hume. In searching for the subjective elements of knowledge, and endeavoring to establish them on a secure basis, he enlarged the circle of the mind, till nothing was left which could be said to belong to the outward world. He thus sowed the seeds of an idealism more intense then Berkeley's, and of a more decided skepticism than Hume's.

13. It is not a little remarkable that the philosophy of Reid also, the other recoil from Hume, while it aims at subverting the system of Berkeley, leaves the door open, and points out the way, to the egotistical system of Fichte.[3] The chief difference between this system and Berkeley's is a very notable one. Berkeley denied the self-reality of the visible world, but affirmed decidedly the real existence of the Infinite Being. In fact what is taken from the world is assigned to Divine agency. According to Fichte, the world

[1] Germany. [2] Pure Reason. Preface to 2d edition.
[3] This observation is Sir W. Hamilton's. Reid, p. 128.

exists only in appearance, which is not however a representation of any Divine or external agency, but the mind's perception of its own spontaneous action. The mind is thus the creator of its own world, if not also of its Supreme Being. But we need not examine the refined doctrine of the author upon this important subject.[1]

His system had the merit of being a veritable novelty, a peculiar merit, at least, if not a high one. He advanced it, at first, with unusual confidence, but afterward admitted it to be equivalent to nihilism. This was to confess, that, notwithstanding its subtilty, its chief merit was its absurdity. Fichte realized the story of Frankenstein; he fled from the monster of his own creation, and endeavored to find a new basis and safer principles of knowledge.

But the nihilism which was so alarming to Fichte, is fearlessly maintained and taught by Hegel and his various followers. This school bears much the same relation to Fichte as Hume to Berkeley. Fichte's peculiar system affirms the being of mind, and of matter as a modification of mind. Hegel "has no such partiality" for mind. He sees no reason why that which perceives should exist any more than that which is perceived. We are to believe in neither rather than in both. The only thing which can be affirmed to exist is the *relation* between them!

Thus the obvious result of the intellectual excitement of Germany since the life of Kant, is to have eliminated both mind and matter from existence, and to have left us a universe of relations. Hume had eliminated mind and matter, and left us impressions and ideas. What may be the exact difference, in point of fact, between a universe of impressions and a universe of relations, may be left to those curious in such researches. Common observers will be apt to think, that the chief effect of the German recoil from the nihilism of Hume is to have substituted a dogmatic and positive, for a modest and negative skepticism. The good sense of the avowed skeptic stands in contrast to the extravagance of the idealist. Hume enunciated his doctrine as the result of speculation on received principles; but so far from pretending to press it on the

[1] On the metaphysical romances of Fichte and his successors, the reader will find probably quite as much information as he will desire in Morell's *History* of Modern Philosophy, vol. ii.

world, he admitted it to be irreconcilable with its necessary beliefs, and opposed to its unavoidable convictions. Hegel has no such modesty; the more preposterous his dogmas, the more necessary to be believed: their inconsistency with the beliefs and convictions of men is no disparagement of their truth, but rather a testimony in their favor.

The history of German metaphysics, since the time of Hume, may be summed up, it seems, in a few words. Kant was satisfied that the field of external objective knowledge was no longer defensible. He therefore sought refuge from practical and religious skepticism in the citadel of the subjective self. He saw that the ideas and impressions of Hume had a real existence, though subjective. He saw that all which concerns man in duty or in destiny must be presented to his mental apperception before it can be his. Right and wrong, pleasure and pain, are real to man in the internal conscience and feeling. But something is wanted beyond conscience and feeling, to give the assurance that the moral law is eternal, and that its awards of happiness or misery are not the fleeting feelings of a moment. He saw the citadel to which he fled to be strong and impregnable in itself, but he forgot the danger of blockade. No defense could have been more gallant. The strength of self is always great in men who have renounced the world. Never were words more sublime, nor deeds more heroic than those of the practical philosophy.[1] But when the field without had been abandoned, all approaches blocked up, and supplies cut off, the garrison was soon starved out, and found that prolonged defense must end in annihilation.

The history is not without instruction. It has given the world a lesson, which one may think might have been anticipated, that nihilism—no world, no self, no God—nihilism is the only possible philosophy—that "world and thought, observation and observer, man and God, are swallowed up and lost in the boundless immensity of a horrible chaos,"[2] unless a safe and sure passage be found from thought to being, from subjective to objective, from phenomena to reality, from the internal mind to the external world.

[1] See, for example, the Life of Fichte.

[2] Vinet's Vital Christianity. Transl. p. 36.

CHAPTER III.

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE.

SECTION I.

FACULTIES OF THE MIND, AND OBVIOUS FACTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

1. The Question stated.—2. Search for an Answer in Facts of Consciousness. —3. Perception and Action.—4. The Understanding.—5. The Affections. —6. Perception.—7. Sensation.—8. Perception.—9. The Will.—10. Simple Faculties.

1. THE nature of our inquiry does not lead us to speak of the Existence of the SUPREME BEING as a truth which can reasonably be called in question. It is a truth as natural to the mind as the existence of itself or of an outward world, and can not be represented as doubtful, but by the same audacity of skepticism. We are to inquire, then, *How do we come by the knowledge of Him*, which we believe ourselves to have, and how can we be reflectively assured of its validity?

The answer is to be sought in the general principles of all knowledge, and we shall begin from the last and obvious facts of perception and action, and endeavor to resolve them into the primary elements or first principles which reason can discover. This part of our subject may serve the double purpose of manifesting the procedure of the mind in its attainment of knowledge, and, at the same time, of exhibiting, in the constitution of man's nature, the most remarkable evidences of intelligent design and adaptation prior in existence to himself.

2. It is not necessary to enter upon a complete investigation of all the faculties and operations of the mind. The subject must be confined, as much as possible, to those particular topics which tend to promote the purpose we have in view.

The facts of consciousness which manifest the communication between the mind and its outward objects may perhaps be divided

into two classes—those of perception, and those of action; those by which we apprehend the qualities of external objects, and those by which we apprehend in ourselves the power of moving them or acting upon them. Not that such divisions are of any importance, except as aids in the commencement of thought. The present division, it is evident, can belong only to the last or complex operations of the mind, not to its simple faculties. When the complex mental processes are compared, and contrasted, and resolved into their elements, the same simple faculties, differently applied or combined, will be found to enter into each of them.

3. We perceive external objects—a tree, a building. This is evidently a complex mental operation. Every object is apprehended by the mind as a combination of several distinct qualities, form, color, etc., of which each is perceived *mediately* or *immediately* through the different senses.

Every perception of an object requires the application of three powers of the mind which may be viewed as distinct: (1) *attention*, which is an action of the will, more or less intense, by which the mind directs itself to its object; (2) *simple perception* of the several qualities; (3) *the combination* of these qualities in one image or perception of the object, which is an act of the *understanding*.

The active powers of the mind comprise: (1) *the will;* (2) the various *affections* which may be its motives to outward exertion.

But divisions of this kind are attended with difficulty, and are necessarily imperfect. They aim at separating in thought things which are inseparable in experience, and can not be enunciated without employing the very terms of which it is proposed to ascertain the true meaning. It is necessary in such attempts to guard against the danger of smuggling in hypotheses under the form of words. But we may safely say, that in communication with the outward world by perception and action, there are brought into play four mental powers which can be considered as distinct from one another: the will, the simple perception, the understanding, and the emotional faculty. On the understanding and the affections a few brief remarks will suffice for our present purpose; on the perception and the will it will be necessary to speak more at length.

4. We have stated this to be the faculty which combines the isolated simple perceptions in one complex perception of an object. This is evidently a distinct faculty from that of simple perception. It is conceivable that we might gain perceptions of form, color, hardness, yet be unable to retain and combine them. The perceptions of different senses, as well as different perceptions of the same sense, unite in every perception of an object. An intellectual process is necessary, beyond the intelligence of simple perception. The mind, in its unity of intelligence, must understand the diversity of the object, and combine its diversity in an objective unity.

This, however, is but one function of the understanding. The same term may be employed to include, in the widest sense, the power of combining several isolated representations, whether material or mental, in one perception or conception. This appears to be keeping close to the common meaning of the word. Thus if we were sensible of a number of successive but unconnected sensations, which, from whatever cause, we could not combine in a distinct complex perception or image of an object, we might say we did not understand the appearances. Again, if a train of thoughts were presented to the mind in words, with a view to explain the force of any term, as *virtue*, *objective*, e. g., to say that we did not understand the explanation, or that our understanding had failed to apprehend the meaning of the words, would mean that we were unable to combine them in an unity of signification, which should give the meaning of the word in question.

The understanding faculty, then, is one, by whatever name it be called, which it is evident the mind must possess, to make possible the perception of an object. It must exist in it, then, prior to any complete act of perception, though it can not be known to exist till subsequently to the perception.

5. Under this head are included all the spontaneous movements or feelings, the instincts, passions, or emotions, which can be discovered in consciousness, and which constitute us sensitive beings. The origin of these, as of all the primary facts of our nature, is enveloped in mystery, but they may be seen to include various phenomena widely different from one another, and arising on very

different occasions. Some of them consist in the soul's sensibility to movements or affections of the corporeal organism. Such are the instincts of the lower animals. But the greater number of the spontaneous feelings have their origin in thought, that is, in the mind itself, and can not be traced to any affection of the body; although it is possible that the body may in some way sympathize with every affection of the mind. Such are the emotions excited by the sublime and beautiful; the feelings of fear, reverence, admiration, love; the aspirations of the soul; the complacency and the remorse of conscience. All these, it is known, are frequent motives to action, and are springs of man's practical life. Considered alone, they can not furnish the evidence of any reality external to the mind, unless we possess an original faculty of inspiration, or intellectual intuition, which receives knowledge from a superior source, or gazes immediately into the depths of being. Such a faculty might be classed among the emotions, and would be undistinguishable from them. Considered as a faculty of knowledge, it must compel assent, and be placed beyond the reach of criticism, or its authority would be liable to be questioned. We shall find, however, that the ordinary emotions of the mind, when examined by its common principles of judgment, furnish some of the most beautiful and convincing evidences of the Existence of the Personal Creator.

6. The faculties of *will* and *perception* demand more particular attention, because it is chiefly through these that the direct communication takes place between the mind and the world. It is therefore in the examination of these faculties, that we may expect to find the principles of judgment, by which we pass beyond the subjective field of consciousness; and it is evident that we must be dependent on these principles for our knowledge of the Supreme Being.

Perception is the faculty which discovers the existence of the external world. That the world exists, is what every man will affirm without hesitation or inquiry as the most unquestionable of truths. How then do we gain this knowledge, and what does it imply? The first and easiest answer is, that we know the world exists, because we see it and feel it—because it affects our senses.

The affirmation of existence is here a judgment founded upon sensation? What, then, is sensation? This, it is clear, must be the first question.

7. Take any single sensation, and, without pretending to any knowledge of real existence, we may easily trace, to a certain extent, the process by which it arises. Whatever the world may be in itself, and whatever the ground of its distinction from the mind, it is manifest, from the comparison of different sensations, that nature must fulfill certain previous conditions in both of them, and in the relation of the one to the other to make sensation possible. Outwardly, matter must possess certain properties or powers; inwardly, the mind must be capable of receiving impressions from without, or must possess *sensibility;* and the two must be in some way mutually related to one another. The two former statements need no illustration; and on the last it is enough to remark, that our several senses are affected by many qualities of bodies, wholly different from one another; color, for instance, different from hardness, and in no way commensurable with it. We have therefore no reason to believe that the sensibility of the mind of man exhausts the properties of matter, or is percipient of all possible forms of existence in space. Other senses might make new discoveries, no less surprising than the sense of sight to one who had been born blind. It is even conceivable that substances may exist contiguous to us in space, yet be as nothing to us, because their properties bear no relation to the sensibility.

The mind is not, however, affected directly by the external world, but through the medium of the body, or rather of the nervous organism. It is here that that communication takes place between mind and matter, which it is proverbial to speak of as an impenetrable mystery. If we commence from without, and endeavor to pass from matter to sensation, we perceive that the connection is dependent upon the constitution of the nervous system, and of the organs of sense. To say nothing of the eye and ear, and their beautiful adaptations to the proper purposes, it is well known that the various nerves possess in themselves some mysterious property, which renders them susceptible of their peculiar impressions; the optic nerve only of light, the acoustic nerve of sound, the nerves

of touch of their own feelings alone. This is shown in a remarkable example by Sir Charles Bell—"When surgeons perform the operation of couching, the point of the needle gives the sensation of pricking, which is an exercise of the nerve of touch, when it passes through the outer coat of the eye; but when it passes through the retina, which is the expanded nerve of vision, and forms the internal coat of the eye, it gives the sensation as if a spark of fire had been produced. The nerve of vision is as insensible to touch, as the nerve of touch is insensible to light."[1] Whether this peculiar susceptibility of the different nerves depends upon their physical construction, or upon their connection with the brain, or upon something beyond either of these, it may be impossible to determine with certainty. It may be conjectured that there is a transmission of physical impressions through the filaments to the brain, and a resulting action of the brain itself; but what may be the nature of these movements, and whether the mind is in proximate connection with the nervous extremities, or only with the terminations of the nerves in the brain, can not easily be ascertained.[2] If the different sensations are produced in different parts of the sensorium, and depend, in any degree, upon a different physical constitution of the parts, it is probable that the nerves must also possess each of them its peculiar property.

Starting then from without, we find that sensation originates in some physical action, or course of physical actions, and is dependent both upon the outward cause, and upon the peculiar properties of the nerves. But we can never pass from these causes to the sensation itself.

If, on the contrary, we commence from within, and observe the internal sensations of the mind, differing from one another in various ways, and never produced at random, but according to regular and constant rules, we conclude that there is a certain relation be-

[1] "The Hand," p. 188.

[2] Dr. Roget considers the brain to be "the organ of which the physical affections are immediately attended by that change in the percipient being which we term *sensation*," and the nerves to be like "a system of electric telegraphs for the instantaneous transmission of sensorial agencies." Bridgewater Treatise, Part iii. Chap. i. There is here a very interesting account of the Physiology of Perception.

tween the product in feeling, and the outward physical action which occasions it; but what that relation is, what may be the connection between the impression and the feeling, how the one leads to the other, or excites the nerve with its peculiar property to produce the other, it is impossible to understand. It appears certain that the *physical* actions, in their intricate minuteness, go beyond all power of art to follow them; else why the infinitesimal complexities of the organism? It is no less certain, that however we may revolve and ponder the mental sensation, we can never pass from it by any process of thought, and arrive by a continuous course at a physical phenomenon.

This observation may illustrate the value of theories which pretend to identify thought with existence. Until such theories can commence from the thought and descend to the outward action, or commence from the outward action and ascend upward to the thought, we shall be justified in regarding such attempts as mere evasions of the difficulty; and in maintaining that whatever mind be, and whatever matter be, there is, to man, an impassable gulf between their fields of phenomena.

We return then to the consideration of perception.

8. Simple perception is an act of consciousness, in which the mind is cognizant of the qualities of external bodies. The perception of any quality requires the fulfillment of certain conditions, which may be viewed, like the conditions of sensation, with reference (1) to the object, and (2) to the perceiving mind.

(1.) *In the object* the essential conditions may be reduced to two, diversity in space or time, and permanence in time. There must be diversity in the qualities of matter to excite attention. One incessant unchanging sensation could never be accompanied with perception through any one of the senses.[1] And each quality must remain permanent for some definite period of time. We can conceive the possibility of a world in which the physical properties of matter should be so changing, and the impressions upon our sensitive organs so fugitive and confused, that experience would be impossible. In such a world we might have continual sensa-

[1] "Sentire semper idem, et non sentire ad idem recidunt," a remark of Hobbes', quoted by Sir W. Hamilton, conveys a self-evident truth.

tions; but could no more gain a single perception, than we can perceive distinct colors upon a rapidly revolving circle.

(2.) *The perceiving mind* brings into action in perception faculties which are not essential to mere sensation. These are nothing less than the will, and the intelligence or reason. If there were no action of the will, we might be sensible of bare impressions, but could never refer them to an outward object. In such a case there could be no distinction of the self from the object. This distinction may be seen to have its ultimate ground as a fact of knowledge, in a comparison of sensation with will, instituted by a spontaneous action of the mind, in the commencement of its conscious life. Intelligence observes, takes up, and appropriates the distinction. Not that the action of the mind is so complex as the description of it, or necessarily a conscious exertion. But there must be some attention, however remiss, in every perception; and this is an act of will. In the perception of *known* objects, where the memory comes in to the aid of the observing faculties, this attention may be so slight and easy as to be unnoticed; but we are more conscious of it in the perception of qualities with which we are unfamiliar.

These observations may be illustrated by the early life of an infant. Simple sensation is, beyond doubt, the first mental phenomenon. The light, or some bright color excites attention; and attention is stimulated by an innate disposition of the mind itself, something like the love of novelty which continues through life. The first sensations must be confused and indistinct; the first effect of that attention, which is thus excited by the pleasure of sensation (and possibly by other causes), must be to sharpen the impressions, and to separate them. Thus the will comes into play before a definite perception can be attained. A mind with sensibility, but without activity, if it be possible in the nature of things, would, at the most, be sensible of an everchanging succession of colors and impressions, but could gain no conception of an object, and would be incapable of what we call experience. It would never gain that knowledge in which a child, as soon as it can speak, shows itself sensible of the distinction between, "This is I," and "This is not I."

But attention can give no perception unless it be intelligent. Perception is an intelligent energy, by which the mind apprehends the qualities delivered to it, as belonging to objects external to itself.

Thus the developed mind, whether it learn to perceive by the slow process of observation and comparison, or, as is known of certain animals,[1] possess from birth the whole apprehension of distance, may be said to have immediate perception of external, and even of distant objects; although this perception is often effected through a causal process of several steps, and a complex action of the mind itself. To call this an immediate perception may seem to be a contradiction in terms. But it is mediate from one point of view, and immediate from another. It is mediate with reference to the laws of matter, but immediate with reference to the action of the mind. In the former view, it appears to be always mediate, for even in the case of touch, there is a transmission of force through the cuticle to the nerve, and it would seem also, through the nerve to the brain, before sensation can take place. But the distinct faculties of the mind combine in one conscious energy, and the intelligence runs at a bound through a series of causes, perceiving none of them but the one to which nature would have it look. It does this in the sight of a distant and in the touch of a near object. There is an action of intelligence, and a spontaneous inference in both cases. The universal and decided testimony of consciousness, shows that the mind is wont, by a single and instantaneous energy, to perceive a large portion of a distant object, and to perceive it as distant, without being obliged to gather up the elements of the perception one by one, or to estimate the distance by an inference founded on the appearances.

Perception, then, is an act of the mind combining three irresolvable powers—the sensibility, the will, and the reason—in one simple energy. We are accustomed to regard these faculties as distinct, but they are never isolated in their application. They may combine in various ways in energies of the mind which are regarded as simple and indivisible, but are resolved into their simpler parts by comparing the different energies with one another.

[1] *Sir* W. Hamilton on Reid, p. 182.

9. The will therefore is the one active power of the mind, which combines with other powers, and communicates to them their activity. It may be defined to be the faculty which is apprehended in the consciousness, as the originating power of the personal self. Not that it can be seen to be an absolute power of self-origination: it is possible that it may always be determined by subtile forces which do not fall within the sphere of consciousness. But so far as apprehension can reach, the phenomena of the will appear to have their origin in an activity of the personal self.

Action differs, then, in two essential particulars from perception. First—there is "a distinct personal consciousness" of exertion, *prior* to some phenomenon in the world; whereas perception is not preceded by any internal consciousness of the means by which it is attained, except the consciousness of attention, which is itself an act of the will.[1] Secondly—in action, the character of the phenomenon appears as dependent on the mental exertion, whereas that of the perception is independent of any power of the self. The power of the mind to lend or withhold its attention has no effect upon the world. "When in broad day-light I open my eyes, it is not in my power to choose whether I shall see or no, or to determine what particular objects shall present themselves to my view."[2] In action, on the contrary, I am able to determine particular results by my exertion.

Thus the two processes are, in some respects, the converse of each other. The occasion of perception is external, and the direction of its process inward from the extremities of the nerves. The occasion of any action is internal, and its direction outward. It is in accordance with these obvious facts, that the sensitive and motor nerves are now known to be distinct from one another.

10. We are thus led to the conclusion that there are four mental powers, or classes of mental powers, each of which can be conceived as original, simple, irresolvable—the sensibility, the emotional faculty, the will, and the intelligence or reason. Of the reason we shall have occasion to speak again, and shall see that it

[1] "Power has reference to something consequent, susceptibility to something antecedent." Chalmers's Bridgewater Treatise, vol. ii. p. 221.

[2] Berkeley on "Human Knowledge," Art. xxix.

may be regarded as the same faculty with that by which the mind combines its simple perceptions in the perception of an object, and which has been denominated the understanding. The sensibility is sometimes included with the affections, and the mind is then said to possess the three powers of reason or understanding, will, and affections. But the sensibility to the impressions of the material world appears to have as good claim to be considered a distinct faculty from the spontaneous affections or moral emotions of the mind, as the intelligence to be distinguished from the will.

SECTION II.

ORIGIN OF ALL KNOWLEDGE IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE FACTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS BY THE REASON.

11. Knowledge of Self and World.—12. Appeal to Common Sense.—13. The Mind and the World in Mutual Relation.—14. Fundamental Cognition of Power.—15. Experience.—Innate Mental Powers.—16. Primary Experience.—17. Who made us thus?—18. The Reason or Intelligence.—19. All immediate Knowledge is relative.—20. Mediate Knowledge of real Being.—21. Course of the Inquiry.

11. From the self-evident facts of consciousness, we recur to the inquiry into their meaning, or the validity of the knowledge they deliver us of real existence, whether of one's self or of the world. These are the two simplest and most elementary facts of knowledge. They are the first definite knowledges[1] of existing things which the mind attains; and are universally received as such by the common sense of mankind. We are to consider their validity, with a view to ascertain, if possible, the principles which must guide us in the examination of our ulterior knowledge of the Infinite Being.

Incomparably the most profound and learned, and, at the same time, exact discussion of these questions, in the English, or probably any other language, is to be found in the Dissertations of Sir W. Hamilton. His answer, if we may state it apart from investigations, is to this effect; that, "to suppose the falsehood of these

[1] "*Knowledges*, in common use with Bacon and our English philosophers till after the time of Locke, ought not to be discarded." Sir W. Hamilton on Reid, p. 763.

first cognitions, is to suppose that we are created capable of intelligence in order to be made the victims of delusion; that God is a deceiver, and the root of our nature a lie."[1] And again: "we believe that what we are compelled to perceive as not-self, is not a perception of self, in reliance on the original necessity of so believing impressed on us by nature.[2]

"*Quæ nisi sit veri ratio quoque falsa fit omnis.*" He appeals, then, to the natural conviction of mankind, and maintains that we have, not a mediate or inferred, but an immediate knowledge of the *non-ego* as distinguished from the *ego*.

But the nature of our inquiry precludes all appeal to the truth of the Creator. It demands a philosophy established on an independent basis, and requires us to regard the existence of the Supreme Being, as the highest and final truth which philosophy is to investigate and establish. And it appears possible to ask the questions, whether their knowledge of the world's existence be not, in the common judgment of men, prior to their knowledge of the Creator, and an elementary truth which needs no other for its support; and whether moral discipline, the work of man, and moral probation, the purpose of life, may not be accomplished, as far as we can judge, in a world of appearance, adapted, in whatever way, to correspondence with the actions of the will, as effectually as in an independently existing world; and, consequently, the truth of God be no more compromised by any theory of material existence, than in the old question respecting the real and apparent motions of the universe?

But, however this be, it seems certain that the appeal to the truth of the Creator, in verification of these primitive decisions of the mind, is inadmissible as a basis of our present inquiry. We are in search of the evidences of His existence, or the principles on which they rest, and are therefore precluded from assuming that truth which is itself the origin of all truth.

12. But the final appeal to the common sense of men is quite admissible. They who deny the truth, that there is a God above us, will generally admit without question that there is a world without us. But the two truths are equally the common products of

[1] Reid, Diss. p. 743, also 745. [2] Ib. p. 750.

human judgment; and it will be very material to show that the knowledge of God, as a really existing Being, rests on the same foundation, is discovered by the same principles of reason, and has as good warrant to be considered objectively valid as the knowledge of one's self and of the world.

13. Let us see what is the foundation of this inferior knowledge. We observe that in the facts of consciousness there are certain ultimate and inexplicable distinctions. It is evident that our knowledge of being, whether of the *ego* or of the *non-ego*, must be in some way dependent upon these distinctions. Let us pay attention to the facts of perception and action, which discover the great distinction between sensibility and will. In perception we are sensible of certain impressions produced by means which are very imperfectly known. In action every movement is attended by a feeling of exertion. We cannot follow the channels which connect an object with a perception, or a volition with an action; but there is a palpable difference in the consciousness between the facts of sensibility and those of will, a difference which can not be got rid of, and which leads to an inevitable result in our knowledge.

On this difference, then, the cognition of the *ego* and the *non-ego*, the mind and the world as distinct from one another, is in some way dependent. If we observe our thoughts, we may see that it is not true that every single fact of consciousness discovers to us that we exist. Doubtless every fact implies existence. That which feels exists, and that which wills exists; but feeling alone, will alone, will not make it cognizant of its being. The personal existence of the *ego* is not apprehended by intelligence till the mind is active as well as sensitive, and perceives the effect of its exertion in the world.

As the will, then, discovers to us the existence of self so soon as its effects upon matter are rendered to us through perception, so, for the same reason, does the sensibility assure us of the not-self. Feeling alone, will alone, could discover neither the one nor the other; both are discovered through the mind's comparison of will with feeling. It can then be seen that perception is a complex action of the mind, involving both will and sensibility

and interpreted by the reason; an action which may always manifest the *ego* and *non-ego* in mutual relation to one another.

Every perception depends up action and reaction in the nervous system. It implies an exertion, more or less intense, of the perceiving mind, and a resistance caused by the object perceived. This is true of all the senses; not only of the touch, in which the nerve is brought into close contact with matter, but also of sight and hearing, where the waves of light or sound impinge upon the expanded nerve of the eye or ear. *The notion of power thus corresponds to the ultimate fact of knowledge which the mind can attain;* and it follows from this account of the origin of all knowledge, of the mind, and of the world, that whatever warrant we have for assigning an objective reality to the one, we have precisely the same warrant for assigning an objective reality to the other.

The mind then, as that which wills and perceives, exists apart from the matter which resists the will and is perceived. Not that they can be known to be distinct from one another, or from all continued dependence on a Superior Being, in the deep reality of their nature. This would be going very far beyond our sphere. The depths of being are unfathomable by any faculty of man. But they are distinct at least as immediate preceding causes of the facts of consciousness; and, beyond this, must be considered as possessing equal claims to independence.

14. Thus the notion of power may be said to be no mere subjective conception, but an immediate cognition of the *ego* and *non-ego* in mutual relation: and it appears that in *causality* the mind has a principle of universal application, which can lay claim to objective validity.[1] It is through a causal process in nature that intelligence is awakened to life, and the first knowledge attained of the distinction between the mind and the world. This causal process can be traced, in all sensation, through several steps; but whether few or many, the mind has in all cases an immediate perception of its own power in that action and reaction with forces from without, which takes place in the nervous organism or in the brain.

[1] See Appendix.

15. Hence we may be able to understand the question, so often discussed, so seldom enunciated with distinctness, yet of so much importance in all inquiries into existence, Does all knowledge originate in experience? In one sense this may be affirmed to be true. For even the simple faculties are not awakened to life, *à priori* conceptions are not brought into possession, unless through a communication of the mind with the outward world. Strictly speaking it can not be said that any of the faculties are innate. The mind is not destitute of natural tendencies like the *tabula rasa* of Locke; but neither has it innate faculties completely formed, though undiscovered, as might be implied if we were to press too far Leibnitz's comparison of it to the figure of Hercules, marked out by natural veins in the unhewn block of marble;[1] much less has it finished, though latent, *a priori* conceptions, as Kant's philosophy would seem to imply. It must have, unquestionably, its innate tendencies or capacities, which may possibly be such in themselves, that they can not be drawn out in any other way than to form the common faculties of human beings. But how far they correspond to the developed powers, how far any faculty can be called innate, how far the formation of them is dependent on the mind's early life in the world, it must be impossible to ascertain. It is conceivable that the character of the sensibility and intelligence may be determined by this *primary experience*, and might have been differently drawn out in a different world.

There must be present at the commencement of life a certain sensitivity to impressions of various kinds, but this may not be identical with the sensibility of common experience. It seems certain, however, that, with its present organism, the mind must be restricted to certain specific qualities of sensibility. The various nervous sensations have their special character. The nerve of sight is unsusceptible, except to light; the acoustic nerve, except to sound. It would seem then, that, with the nervous system of man, the senses could not, in any other world, have been different from what they are. They must have lain dormant, unless furnished with their proper outward occasions of sensibility.

[1] Leibnitz, Op. p. 196. Nouv. Ess. Av.-prop.

Yet it can not be known to be necessary in the nature of things, that intelligence must be confined to an organism of a particular conformation, and which is capable only of certain special sensations. Much less can it be assumed that the human faculties and necessary forms of thought, are the only possible developments of the innate qualities of the soul.

16. But we may know that the mind, prior to that experience by which, in its developed condition, it gains its knowledge through outward observation, has its faculties awakened by means of a spontaneous communication with the world, and emerges to the common experience of life ready furnished, not only with the ability to learn what it may be taught, but with certain universal principles, which must guide and govern it in all it can learn. These are its *à priori* principles of judgment, its principles of common sense, its necessary truths, received therefore not on belief, but through a compulsion of nature. From the commencement of life the mind acts and reacts in a mysterious manner with the world around, and is excited by this action, and by its own innate affections, to certain processes of spontaneous thought, which furnish it with certain principles of judgment and facts of knowledge, founded upon its original relation to the world, and to be carried along with it in all subsequent experience. Having gained the full possession of its intelligence, it is able to look back to the past, and then sees that knowledge, though wholly dependent upon experience for the occasions of its growth, must be referred, however, to nature for its causes. Knowledge springs up naturally out of being, but needs culture for its improvement. It is at first the unavoidable consequence of the mind's existence in the world, and depends on the constitution and frame of both.

It is easy to see that in some branches the knowledge and personal character of man are dependent upon contingent circumstances. His moral nature, it is unquestionable, may degenerate from age to age. It may also be improved and elevated. Hence it must be unfair to draw a general conclusion respecting the innate mental powers, from the degenerate types of humanity. Other branches of knowledge are such that to present them to the mind is to secure its uniform adherence, and to develop its faculties in

one uniform way. Yet even here, where the causes of knowledge rest in nature, the experience-occasions may be withheld, and man may intellectually, as well as morally, be degraded to the beasts that perish.

Primary experience, then, may denote that mysterious communication between the mind and the world, which awakens the faculties of the mind, and supplies its facts of consciousness and its fundamental knowledges, but is beyond the reach of consciousness. It is the early experience of a child, but it also lies at the root of all the common experience of human life.

It appears, then, that the mind, at the commencement of life and previously to this first experience, ought not to be compared, as by Locke, to a sheet of blank paper; nor yet, as by Kant, to a sheet written all over with hieroglyphics. It would seem to resemble, not so much the manufactured paper, as the pulp of which it is to consist; this, however, not lying in a shapeless mass, but spread out in a wonderful machine, which proceeds at once to roll the sheet and to impress upon it indelible characters. To complete the comparison, we may imagine the pulp and the machine to possess, each of them, certain chemical properties, or, through the agency of a Wise Designer, to be imprinted with certain chemical substances which have an affinity for one another.

17. Can the mind evade the inevitable questions, Who prepared the pulp? Who made the machine? Who imparted to them their properties, and adapted them so perfectly to one another, as to fit them for evolving that wonderful world of beauty and moral goodness, of intelligence, and love, which the mind of man claims for its domain? Having looked back thus far from its present experience to its natural education, can the reason be interdicted all question as to the *beyond*? Can it be held in check by atheism with its mock professions of humility? It can not help replying, The nature which has developed it into being with the power of asking questions, thereby encourages it to inquire. The legitimacy of the questions and the true answer, will be considered in subsequent chapters.

18. Some observations may now be made on the intellectual faculty. In its return from the first cognition of power or cause,

the mind perceives that all its knowledge is gained by means of the unresolvable, inexplicable, original faculty—the Reason or Intelligence. Without this there might be sensation, but there could be no ascription of the sensation to a cause, no perception of an outward quality. Intelligence, then, enters into the first act of perception, and continues in every subsequent mental process, whether in the observation of the outward world, or in the reflex observation of the mind itself.

The faculty which combines the simple perceptions, and so gives the knowledge of complex objects, has been called the understanding. It is an energy of the mind as intelligent. It is an ultimate fact of knowledge, that the mind is conscious of itself as unity, of the world as diversity. The outward world is seen as diverse through the various sensations, but is bound in certain relations—those of space—which are independent of the perceiving subject. The mind requires a cause, external to itself, of the constant representation of unity in diversity, no less than of the representation of different qualities. The reason, therefore, in virtue of its causal principle, refers these relations to the object. Precisely as the intelligence refers the single perception to an external cause, so it refers the combination of perceptions to one object. The understanding is thus the same faculty with the reason, but in certain particular applications.

In this view, then, the mind may be said to have immediate perception of all the qualities of bodies which directly affect the senses, and not only of the qualities, but of the object itself as a combination of the qualities. Its attention is awakened by the affections of its organism, produced by the physical movements of sensation; and then the intelligence runs at a bound through the causal processes, and refers each single sensation to the outward cause presented to it by nature, and the subjective union of sensations to an objective union in the world.

But the intelligence rises above the perception of objects to that of the visible universe, and above the world of matter to that of man as an intelligent, sensitive, and moral agent. It perceives and appreciates, in the visible universe, the adaptation of means to ends; in the moral world, the relations of eternal right. It

looks backward in life from thought to being, and interprets the deliverances of consciousness; it looks forward in the world of action, and disposes with contrivance and design. In perception, reason interprets the meaning; in action, it supplies the purpose. It is the faculty by which the mind gains the first elements of knowledge, and by which it rises to the highest knowledge of which man is capable. And as in the first the notion of causation is its ultimate principle, so the same principle is carried along with it to the last. It is by its use of the principle of causality that reason is distinguished from feeling. Whether it pass from premises to conclusions, or from causes to effects, or back from effects to causes; whether it investigate the first principles of knowledge, or follow them out to their consequences, it always assumes the universal law of causality, and judges by it.

But in its lowest, and in its highest movements, it may be discriminated with difficulty from the spontaneous affections. The first knowledges of the mind are sometimes said to rest on faith or feeling. The happy guesses of genius, its flashes of thought and imagination, are often as spontaneous as the feelings. They show the soul to be in possession of treasures which it has not reckoned. But feelings may enlighten, or may delude. Reason, intelligence claims the right to examine and to decide. It discerns between the true and the false; it weighs the pretended gold, and rings it, and proves it to be genuine before it counts it among its treasures. It possesses many truths which came at first with the spontaneity of the emotions, but have since been examined and proved by searching tests. Such are its own being, and the moral law; such is its highest and universal truth, that man is the creature of a Personal Creator.

19. A few observations are requisite, with reference to the extent and validity of knowledge.

All immediate knowledge, it will be seen, is relative, and is of phenomena, not of real being. Our cognitions extend to the effects of which the causes are beyond our reach. They can not penetrate the mystery of being, but are confined to its manifestations.

But though nature has prescribed impassable limits to our immediate knowledge, yet we are not wholly shut up within the

internal and subjective field. The intelligent principle of causality irresistibly bears us beyond it to an objective universe, which contains both the self and the world. This principle gives us, it is true, no information of either the one or the other considered in itself, but it assures us of the fact that *they are*, and compels us to infer *diversities in their real nature, corresponding to the diversities of appearance.*

Matter is known through its properties, as that which affects the sensibility. It is visible, tangible, extended; mind is that which feels, and wills, and thinks; but the essential nature of either of them; what it may be to beings different from man in sensibility or intelligence; what it may be in itself, or as it must be known to perfect intelligence, must be to man quite incomprehensible. But that mind really exists as the subject of certain powers, and matter as the subject of properties, this is an unavoidable cognition.

We live then in a world of phenomena and relations, which, from our mental constitution, we can not help regarding as manifestations of actual realities. We pass spontaneously from the appearances to their causes, although these in themselves can never be known. So irresistible is the force of nature in this respect, that the common sense of mankind is accustomed to confuse the mental impression with its outward cause, and to comprise the two in one complex notion of an object, which can not without thought and attention be resolved into its simple elements.

20. It appears then, that, though we can not have an immediate knowledge of real being, yet we may be said to know it mediately in its manifestations. Cognition of the effect is thus in all human knowledge tantamount to cognition of the cause; for the cause is known in and by the effect. It can be regarded as cause only so far as its potency is thus expressed and discovered, and may therefore be said to be adequately measured by the effect, and to be thus mediately known.

Pure being is in itself not only unknown but inconceivable. Without action or manifestation, it is, to man at least, equivalent to non-being, for it can not possibly become known. But whatever is to man existent, whatever is done or manifested, involves

power proportionate to the result of appearance, and must be referred to its adequate cause.

Although, then, the causes of phenomena may be in themselves inscrutable, yet we are compelled to know and distinguish them by their effects. Whatever be the differences of real being, like effects imply a like cause, unlike effects must have causes which are unlike. Things can never be known to be totally like or unlike in their whole nature, because we can have only a partial knowledge of any thing; we can only say that they are like or unlike, so far as their reality is mediately known, that is so far as they are objects *to us*.

And this is all the knowledge which can be of use to us, either for the welfare of life, or for its religious ends. It is not necessary to comprehend the secret nature of things before we can apply them usefully. We need not know what electricity is, to employ it as a means of communication. We do not want a perfect knowledge of the nature of wood—the secret processes of vegetation by which it has grown, the inward causes and molecular conditions on which its properties depend—for the construction of the roof of a house. It is possible enough that such an insight into the secret nature of things, might save us a vast amount of labor and difficulty. It is conceivable that other beings may possess some penetrating sense, by which they can know at sight, and without experience, all the properties of any material substance. We might have been endowed with an immediate perception of the electric fluid, and not dependent on some accident for its discovery, after it had eluded observation for thousands of years. There may be beings who can see it immediately in nature, and perhaps can no more avoid the sight of it than the open eyes of man can avoid the sunshine. There may be beings in the universe who have employed it for ages past, as it is now applied by man, and to whom it may even be the ordinary medium of communication, as to man the air is the medium of sound.

But we can not tell how far such knowledge would be consistent with the design of the Creator in our existence here. Individual or social progress is through the toil and patience of experience. Moreover it is not difficult to see that to press the ques-

tion of the essence of things to its limits, is in fact to ask what is the exact process of creation. It is to demand a full comprehension of creative agency, which would be tantamount to the power to create. The theist will easily believe that this is more than man can ever attain, either in this life or in any other.

21. From a theology founded on the foregoing principles (12–20), the atheist may find an outlet in total skepticism. If it be demonstrated that our knowledge of the Supreme Being is as valid, and not less inadequate than that of an external world, he may then have the hardihood to affirm that both knowledges are illusive, and all philosophy impossible. He may deny that we have as yet attained any strict cognition either of the soul or of the world, as dependent or independent in existence. We see indeed —this is indisputable, that the world is not dependent in existence upon that conscious energy of the soul which we call will. But may it not be evolved by a spontaneous energy of our nature, lying beyond the reach of consciousness, and independent of the will? The springing up of our own existence, it may be alleged, is beyond the consciousness and out of the sphere of the volition. Or again, the materialist may assign real existence to matter, and make mind to be but a certain evolution from it, or a happy result of organization. Or he may affirm that many conceivable theories have not been confuted.

Granted. We profess to find in the foregoing observations a basis for the demonstration that our knowledge of the Infinite Being is as valid as that of the finite. If the question be pressed farther, it must be admitted assuredly that the depths of being are unfathomable. Whether, in the absolute nature of things, the mind is wholly distinct from the world or in any way related to it, is beyond the province of man's intelligence. It can not be seen how things which do appear flow forth from the fountain of existence. The only course which remains open, in dealing with this total skepticism, is to consider the various theories of existence (or nonentity) which have amused or perplexed the world; and to examine whether any of them be a reasonable account of evident facts. We shall find perhaps that to deny the existence of either the self, the world, or the Creator, is to involve ourselves

in endless absurdities. We may find that the only consistent alternative of theism is nihilism, and the atheist must then be left to take his choice.

We are thus brought to an important branch of our subject, which will next engage our attention—the examination of different theories of existence, and different systems of unbelief. The direct arguments of theism will form the subject of Book II.

CHAPTER IV.

SPECULATIVE THEORIES OF EXISTENCE.

1. Aim of Theories.—2. Speculative Theories.—3. Theories to be considered.

1. A THEORY of existence professes to account for the phenomena of nature by referring them to their first or independent cause or causes. Many such theories have been current, differing from one another both in principles and in pretensions. The most opposite of them have been pressed into the service of atheism, some as remarkable for dogmatism, as others for their professions of doubtfulness and humility. Some thinkers will profess to understand the whole mystery of being, and through immediate intuition of the absolute, to comprehend the infinite field of Eternal Truth, within the mind of a creature of yesterday. Others profess themselves overwhelmed by the immensity of nature, and sunk in silent awe, pronounce it audacious to interpret her mysterious language, or to affirm, since she is so powerful and so majestic, that she can be subject to a Creator and Governor. Her marvelous variety has no effect upon them but to excite amazement: her wonderful works serve only to fill the mind with wonder: her vast design is a riddle far too difficult and complicated for man to solve. But professions of humility are often the cloak of pride, and the bold theory is wont to lurk beneath the modest doubt.

Mind and matter have at least an apparent, that is, a dependent existence. The question is—What existence is independent?

Where is the fountain of life? Where the real and absolute which is the basis of the phenomenal?

Of the theories which have been proposed in answer, we shall briefly indicate the most obvious, and then examine such as are commonly made the basis of infidelity.

2. The possible answers may be divided into four classes, and these again into several distinct systems. They may be represented as follows:

I. ATHEISM; which assigns independent existence to

1. The self, or mind.
2. The material world.
3. Both the mind and matter.
4. Neither of them; which is nihilism.

II. PANTHEISM; which professes to acknowledge an eternal self-existent Being, but either

1. Identifies its god with the known universe, or
2. Makes mind and matter to be necessary evolutions, and inseparable parts of his nature.

III. SPURIOUS THEISM; which attributes independent existence to God, together with

Self-existent spirits.
Self-existent matter.
Self-existent spirits and matter.

IV. MONOTHEISM; which affirms the existence of One God, of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, by Whom all things exist. It becomes

CHRISTIAN THEISM; when its view of the Divine Character is consistent with that exhibited in the Old and New Testaments, and especially in the doctrines of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

These systems may be seen to be subject to numerous modifications and subdivisions. The limits of I. and II. are often difficult to be defined. The theories II. (2.) sometimes verge upon III.

Monotheism and Christian Theism affirm both mind and matter to be created; but whether they now exist independently, or dependently—through the power communicated once for all in the origin of an accomplished creation, or by the continued operation of the Creator, is a question on which Christians think differently.

On the former hypothesis we may have theories which ascribe present independent existence to either (1.) mind alone, or (2.) matter alone.

(1.) If to mind alone—the existence of matter may be conceived to consist (*a*) in its representation by the spontaneous energy of the mind, but according to laws impressed by the Creator. This is absolute, but not atheistic idealism. Or (*b*) matter may be a representation to the mind of man, through the continued Divine agency, which is Berkeley's theory. He might have maintained the mind itself to be in present existence either independent or dependent on the First Cause. The existence of matter is, in this theory, dependent both upon that of the infinite and that of finite minds.

(2.) Matter alone may be conceived to exist independently by creation, and to give rise to the existence of mind through the action of divinely-ordained laws. This appears to be the opinion of some speculative physiologists, and is not necessarily fatal either to their theism or their Christianity. But it seems to tremble on the verge of atheism; at least unless it hold a very refined and spiritual theory of material existence. To regard gross visible matter as prior in being to the mind of man, and as evolving it by natural laws, may be inconsistent with its subordination to the Divine mind.

These divisions and subdivisions are formed, it will be evident, with reference only to conceptions, and can impose no limitation on the possibilities of things. They are affirmed objectively true, when they are made the bases of infidel systems.

3. Of these conceivable systems we shall consider:

I. The atheistic systems of (1) idealism; (2) and (3) materialism. The fourth division deserves no further notice. Nihilists are not to be reasoned with.

II. Systems of pantheism.

IV. The foundations of true theism will engage our subsequent inquiries.

The theories of III. are in this country matters of mere speculative curiosity. They are all found in Hindoo systems of philosophy.[1]

[1] Of which some account may be found in Schlegel's Philosophy of History, Lect. vi.

The second of this class was in former times very prevalent in the world. It has generally originated in speculate attempts to account for the existence of evil. But Manichæan and kindred schemes are at present little likely to be revived.[1] They are confuted by the direct evidences of theism.

SECTION I.

IDEALISM.

4. Account of it.—5. The Mind contributes to all Knowledge.—6. Atheistic Form.—7. Existence of other Men.—8. Kant and Copernicus.—9. Idealism requires Theism.—10. Berkeley's Idealism.

4. Idealism finds its *real being* in mind, and regards the material world as mere appearance. The mind not only gives the coloring, but creates the whole substance of that picture of the universe which is spread before it. It is a picture of marvelous sublimity and beauty to the eye, but is not really a picture spread out in the expanse of space, and always the same though there be no mind to behold it.

Something, it is evident, is due to the mind itself. There can be no picture without the light, and what is light till it has touched the sensibility? It is known to be a subtile ether, which can have but a physical action on the nerve of sight. By a sense sufficiently acute, light will be perceived as an elastic fluid medium pervading all space, and undulating in waves which vary, it is said, from the thirty-seven-thousandth to the sixty-thousandth part of an inch in length, according to the different colors which they exhibit through the eye of man; and are propagated through space with the velocity of twelve millions of miles in a minute. The ether itself is, from its tenuity, as far beyond the reach of perception through the senses of the body, as the speed of its transmission exceeds the conception of the mind. Even to a mind and organ

[1] These theories generally represent eternal matter as independent of the Supreme Being. It is not generally observed that matter is not necessarily independent because eternal. A Being who exists eternally may be conceived eternally to create subordinate beings, who exist through His continued operation.

of sight in other respects human, but sensitive to impressions of infinitesimal duration, light would no longer appear continuous, but would be a rapid succession of sparks, possibly of differently colored sparks. And it would not be seen as uniform light, but as rays or sparks perhaps thinly scattered in the darkness; like certain leaves and other substances, which appear of uniform color to the naked eye, but which the microscope discovers to owe their color to discrete particles diffused through their structure.

If the same mind be conceived to possess another organ of sense, which could perceive the luminiferous medium itself as its object, the light to such a sense would no longer be light at all. It is through the peculiar action of the optic nerve that the mind receives the sensation of light. Through a sense which could perceive the ether itself, it would appear perhaps like a multitude of minute objects, no longer luminous, in space. The mind would need to be furnished with another organism, and would require another luminiferous medium to throw light upon the light.

5. It is the mind which sees; the mind which translates the movements of a vibrating medium into the sensations of light and color. All is darkness without the mind. There is no picture of visible nature, unless the mind be there to behold it. It is like an invisible photograph, which wants the requisite agent to bring it out, or like a chemical picture, which is rendered visible by the heat of the fire. It is brought out by the vital warmth, and fixed by the chemics of the living soul.

To the perception of the outward world then, something, it is evident, is contributed by the mind itself; something comes from without. The mind can not be regarded as merely passive. It is not only active in giving its attention, but has also an unconscious activity in receiving its impressions.

But may not the perceiving mind be the creator of its whole world of perception? It gives the light and coloring to nature's picture, may it not be the author also of the outline or shape, and of the invisible net-work which receives the coloring? Mind, it is true, is distinguished from matter, so far as we can see, by the facts of the will; yet of that which is known as matter, something we see comes from the mind's sensibility. May not this faculty

be the origin of the whole? May not all the laws and appearances of nature be evolved from a spontaneous action of the soul, according to the laws of its being? May not life be a self-consistent dream? It is a supposable theory of existence, and one not to be refuted by arguments, nor quite evaded on any theory of perception. We have an immediate knowledge of the self and the world; but so long as it is only relative, till we can descend beneath phenomena to realities, we are open to the question, May not the *non-ego* be presented by the mind to itself, and the act of perception a relation between one faculty and another?

This is the theory of egoistical idealism. It is too subtile when fully apprehended, too absurd when superficial, to furnish a popular system of atheism. It can not, like materialism, be spun into plausible theories, which seem to explain every thing while they explain nothing. It therefore deserves attention rather as the antagonist and corrective of materialism, than as dangerous on its own account.

6. In its atheistic form it is irretrievably absurd. For it implies that the solitary thinker is himself the sole existing being in the universe. He is God and the universe in his own person. Every thing else is a mere vision; all mankind, in all the movements of life and history, nothing but the phantoms of his own brain! As soon as he discovers himself to be not the only existent being, but one of a multitude, he has ground for believing in a Creator of human nature, who is the Ordainer of its common faculties of self-development and observation.

7. Since the simple and elementary knowledge of the existence of other men rests on principles in many respects similar to that of the existence of the Deity; and since atheists frequently maintain their skepticism on principles, which, if applied consistently, would lead them to deny that other men exist, a few brief remarks on this topic will not be inappropriate.

That other men exist, is one of the truths which may be said to be as certainly known as one's own existence. This knowledge is a very early result of observation. It is prior, in fact, to the determinate notion of self, and always remains beyond the reach of skepticism. The existence of the world may be denied, except as

mere appearance, of which the causes are in the mind or in some superior mind: the existence of the mind may be resolved into a flux of ideas and impressions; but no skepticism can withstand the conviction, that there are many such fluxes besides one's self. This fact may be said to be as certain as the subjective facts of consciousness.

If we inquire how this knowledge is first obtained, we shall find it difficult to make any other answer than that it is through the mind's spontaneous use of the principle of causality, applied in innumerable instances, which mutually confirm and strengthen one another. It would be ludicrous to attempt the formal proof of any thing so original and simple; but if demonstration were required, it might be found in comparing the various consequences and appearances in the outward world which arise from the existence of one's self, with the similar appearances and actions which we ascribe to others. Or the truth might first be *assumed* and then *established*, like the laws of motion in dynamics, by the consistency of endless results in which it is assumed. If this did not satisfy the complete egoist, we could only dilate on the absurdities of his notion. "You make my being dependent on yours, may I not, with equal reason, consider yours to be dependent on mine? Surely it must be unreasonable in a philosopher, after his mind has been developed by intercourse with the world, and with those before him; after his primary experience in this world of life and matter has imparted to him those necessary judgments and principles of thought, without which both thought and experience had been impossible—it must be unreasonable and ungrateful to employ those very principles in denying the existence of the world and of the minds which have tutored you into intelligent being, except as subjective impressions of your own."

To include the existence of other men in the vision of idealism, is too violent an absurdity for any one in his sane senses. And this is a point to be taken account of, in the question of the existence of the world independently of the mind. The communication of thought between mind and mind discovers the world to be the same to all minds, and therefore, besides the facts of external appearance presented to each single mind, we have to account for

the constant contemporaneousness and similarity of appearances to many minds.

8. It would seem to have been a somewhat unfortunate comparison of Kant's, between his own position in the domain of pure reason and that of Copernicus in astronomy. He was speaking of his new theory of experience, that part of his system which was developed in the idealism of Fichte. He had seen that skepticism was the inevitable result of the doctrine which derived all knowledge from that experience, which consists in the passive reception of sensations, by the developed mind, from the world without. With a view to establish unquestionable and immutable first principles, which experience could never furnish, he paid attention to the intellectual nature of man, and saw that the mind is not in experience a mere passive recipient, but has native principles of its own, which combine with the received impressions, and give the *form* under which the *matter* of the outward world is presented to the mind.

But here arises a difficulty. On the sensation theory, nothing was more simple than to conceive the picture of the world as inscribed by the senses on the blank sheet of the mind; now the mind and the world both contribute to the result: how then does the combination take place? It is here that Kant exemplifies the common tendency of men to pass from one extreme to the opposite. Formerly in the production of knowledge the world had effected every thing, the mind nothing. He gives us instead a theory in which every thing is due to the mind, and nothing is left which can be assigned to the world.

How does the combination take place between the mind and the world in experience? Kant's answer is briefly this: that whereas formerly the outward objects had been the cause of knowledge, we are now to consider the mind as possessing certain forms of its own, under which all knowledge must fall. Outward objects must be such as humbly to adapt themselves to these *à priori* forms of thought, or the mind will not condescend to notice them. Thus "the mind is the author of its own experience." "It has been hitherto assumed," he says, "that all cognition must accommodate itself to the external objects, but let it be tried wheth-

er in the problems of metaphysics we do not succeed better on the assumption, that the objects must accommodate themselves to our cognition. The case is similar to that of Copernicus, who, finding he did not succeed in explaining the movements of the heavenly bodies, when he supposed them all to turn round the spectator, tried whether it would not answer better to suppose the spectator himself to turn, and the stars to be at rest."[1] The spectator of Copernicus is here intended to represent the perceiving mind, and the stars to be the various objects of perception. The mind, then, is supposed to impart from itself to the various objects that which is common to them all, as *e. g.* their space relations. To use his own illustration—"Not only are the drops of rain mere phenomena, but their round form itself, and even the space in which they fall, are nothing considered in themselves, but only modifications or fundamental forms of our sensible intuition."[2]

But in the case of Copernicus, the *one* diurnal motion of the earth accounted for *many* phenomena, namely the apparent diurnal motions of all the stars, which are perfectly similar to one another. In the present case the objects are indeed so far similar that they are all in space; but in their relations to space, in shape, they are wholly different from one another. The stars appear to revolve round the earth, but they all revolve in precisely the same time, and keep the same relative positions: objects appear in space, but they are all different in space.

But we may make the cases perfectly parallel, if instead of considering many objects and one mind, we consider one object and many minds. Here we know, from the communication of mind with mind, that the appearance of the one object is the same to all minds. It is therefore philosophical to choose, like Copernicus, the simple explanation of the phenomena, by seeking the cause of the appearances in the one object, and not in the many minds. If the minds made each of them its own object, we should want some cause of their agreement in time and figure; just as when the stars were supposed to move round the spectator, it was necessary to regard them as all fixed in one moving firmament.

[1] Rein Vern. p. 670; Preface to 2d Ed. Heywood, p. xxv.
[2] Ib. p. 52. Transl. p. 41.

9. In short the egoist must have recourse to theism. Fichte may take refuge with Berkeley,[1] to escape palpable absurdity. Unless every object have its particular form, of square or round or the like, in itself, or at least the causes of its figure in itself, we must admit a cause superior to all the perceiving minds, which makes them represent to themselves similar pictures as of one and the same world.

It seems then that the phenomena of nature are not to be accounted for with equal ease and simplicity on every conceivable theory of existence.

10. Berkeley's system is far less repugnant to the common reason. The passage to the outward world is effected by means of the causal law, but the substratum of the world is the Divine agency.[2] He professed to give a demonstration of his theory, an attempt in which he could not but fail. It is no less impossible to give an exact demonstration to the contrary.[3]

It has been attempted to be argued, that the system has an advantage over others in point of simplicity. For if the Creator be a spiritual Being, and the spirit the immortal part of man; if the visible world be perishable, and all the purposes of life and religion depend only on the world of thought and appearance; what need, it is demanded, of an independent world of inert matter?

The answer to this argument furnishes the best answer to the theory. It may be tolerated as a conceivable account of things; but when it begins to make exclusive pretensions, it invites us to

[1] Or with an equivalent theory. [2] See above, c. ii. 9.

[3] Even on the strictest theory of immediate perception the *non-ego* may be the Divine Being. Can an answer to this idealism be founded on our immediate knowledge of the space-relations of matter before we have refuted both Kant's and Sir Isaac Newton's doctrines of space? A difficult undertaking. To the superficial answers founded on a stone or a precipice Berkeley might have given a mathematical retort, that even if matter be considered non-existent (=0), still, since the human body must in that case also be non-existent (=0), the relation between the nonentities may still be a finite blow! But he debarred himself from this answer by his mathematical speculations. It is a curious fact that the denier of the differential mathematics should have asserted what is equivalent, in the common apprehension of it, to a differential theory of material existence.

inquire more particularly whether it be the simplest, or most probable, or even competent explanation.

And it is certain that there are facts of observation, which are more easily accounted for on the common doctrine of the existence of matter. The law of parsimony which is alleged in favor of idealism, may with greater justice be retorted against it. If all appearances are produced in the mind by the immediate action of the Omnipresent Creator, what account shall we give of the wonderful complexity of creation, the marvelous structure for instance of the human frame, the endless combinations and adaptations and chains of laws, which seem to bind together the universe, and these not all lying within the observation of man, but extending beyond it in all directions? The loadstone has been cited as an evidence against this theory,[1] but is not a stronger objection than many other specific properties of material substances.

It may be replied perhaps that these complexities of the visible world display the immensity of the Creator, and serve at the same time to conceal His Majesty from the immediate gaze; but there are other considerations to which this answer would be irrelevant. The most remarkable of these may be drawn from geology. This science unfolds the history of the globe for countless ages before the existence of man, discovering the remains of innumerable varieties of living creatures which inhabited the earth, before it was adapted to be his dwelling-place. If, then, the existence of the world is but the present act of the Creator upon the mind, what need can there be, what purpose can it serve, that this present act should be such as to contain in itself a record of all past acts, which can so slightly concern us? If we are to apply the law of parsimony to the Divine agency, how are we to account for the fact that His operation is not only that which is necessary for beings now existing, but a perpetual reproduction of the remains of even the most insignificant creatures which existed in ages past, nay even of their footsteps on the beach, and of the impressions of drops of rain? If man be the only being of the world who really exists, why should that phenomenal existence have been bestowed at all on the geological nautilus or belemnite? And why should

[1] Mentioned by Coleridge.

the world itself appear to have advanced to its present condition through a series of previous states and revolutions continued through countless ages of time?

These remarks do not pretend to be a confutation of Berkeley's idealism, but they are a sufficient answer to the pretense of greater simplicity. It is evident that matter exists in such a way as to receive in itself the records of its own history, and to carry on through distant ages the story of its former condition, its strange inhabitants, its many changes and catastrophes.[1] Beyond this we have no knowledge of its internal nature, nor is it of the least consequence that we should.

SECTION II.

MATERIALISM.

11. Popular Materialism is shallow.—12. The "System of Nature."—13. Mind and Matter incommensurable.—14. Materialism explains Nothing.—15. Systems of Materialism.—The Hylopathian.—The Hylozoic.—The Homœomerian.—The Democritic.—The Pseudo-stoical, or Cosmo-plastic.—16. These Theories still current.—17. Theory of Development.—18. "The Vestiges of Creation."—19. Philosophy of the Theory.—20. Atheistic material Development.—Revival of the Stoical System, and of the Cosmo-plastic Atheism.—21. Self-creation.—The Vestiges of Anaximander.—22. Limitations of the Theory.—23. Retort of Idealism.—24. Monadology. Atheism not always corporeal.—25. Immaterial Substance.—26. Monadology.—27. Creation of Matter.—28. Dynamical Theory of Perception.—29. Dynamical Theory of Existence.

11. An atheistic theory, which assigns all the reality of being to matter, regarding mind itself as material in its essence, has one great advantage over an atheistic idealism. The material world is prior in existence to every individual mind; its forces incomparably surpass all human power; it extends in its vastness beyond the faculties of movement, of sight, of imagination; and

[1] This fact has no significance on Des Cartes' curious hypothesis of creation:—"M. Descartes a pensé que Dieu avait formé le monde tout d'un coup; mais il a cru aussi que Dieu l'avait formé dans le même état, dans le même ordre, et dans le même arrangement de parties où il aurait été s'il l'avait formé peu à peu par les voies les plus simples." (Malebranche, Recherche, l. vi. p. ii. c. iv.) But this appears to be one of the struggles of reason against blind authority.

must be admitted by all to be instrumental in the mind's development, if not the source of its whole being.

But materialism is open to the question, What is this *matter* which contains the source and the reality of all things? Is it what we see and feel, the extended, the inert, the colored? But these are properties in relation to the cognition-faculties; and the question is, What is this matter prior to the mind which is born from it, what is it in itself? It is a short way of accounting for every thing first to convert the sensations into objects, then attribute to these subject-objects an eternal existence, and declare them to be the reservoir of all potential being and the source of all actual phenomena. It is to include within the circle of human knowledge what runs out to the infinite in every direction, and then invest with the attribute of eternity what is known to be but a thing of yesterday. It is to compress the infinite within the finite, then stretch the finite to the eternal. This awkward attempt to make sensations into objects takes away, in fact, the existence of that very material world which is pretended to be the alone existent, and thus, like extreme idealism, is presently reduced to nihilism.

Thus dualism or nihilism are the only alternatives. Mind and matter are distinct entities. Deny either of them, and you are presently found to be denying the other. Nihilism is the corollary of extreme materialism and of extreme idealism.

Yet this kind of materialism, coarse and shallow as it is, has found great favor with atheists of all ages. Its superficialness is its recommendation. Men are glad to find that philosophy can easily be kept within the limits of the popular understanding, and readily embrace theories which seem to be easily comprehensible. Thus the weakness of materialism is its strength. Its conceptions are obvious, its reasonings can be followed and its results mastered without any effort of thought, and easily fascinate minds eager for novelty, but averse to troublesome abstract investigation. Men are generally more inquisitive than thoughtful: the most patient and intelligent can ask far more questions than they can answer.

12. It is to this delusive simplicity that "the system of nature," commonly ascribed to Mirabaud, and works of a similar character,

owe their influence over many minds. The reader follows them without trouble, and thinks that to peruse and understand them is to solve the problem of existence and to comprehend all the mysteries of the universe. This is what they pretend to teach him. Matter evidently exists; it is extended and heavy, and so on; it possesses innumerable properties, and is connected in its parts by innumerable relations. It is the source of all our knowledge; it is discovered to us by all our senses; it is the only existing thing we can either see or feel; it must therefore be the only thing which exists at all. Every thinker admits that all knowledge comes through the senses, and what can we discover by the senses but the material world? But the advocates of this "Dirt-philosophy"[1] must speak for themselves.

"We only assure ourselves," says one, "of that which we see; we yield to nothing but evidence; if we have a system, it is one founded upon facts; we perceive in ourselves, we behold every where else nothing but matter; we therefore conclude from it that matter can both feel and think." . . . "We scrupulously confine ourselves to what comes to our knowledge through the medium of the senses, the only instruments with which nature has furnished us to discover truth."[2]

The material world, then, includes every thing which exists; matter assumes various forms; it is inert and insensate in the world, it becomes living and sensitive in the mind. The mind, in fact, is nothing else than a material organism, the brain. Sensation is produced by physical actions on the brain through the nerves of sense, certain movements and vibrations ensue, and these movements, variously modified by circumstances, some of them probably up and down, and some to the right and left, some straight and some spiral, some circular and some elliptical, these are nothing else than the mind's feelings and thoughts. All this seems very simple and very plausible. Every one can understand the words and sentences, but every one does not see that, though it pretends to explain every thing, it really explains nothing. The whole mystery is left precisely where it was, for it has not

[1] "In the emphatic language of Fichte." Sir William Hamilton, Discussions, p. 39.

[2] System of Nature, ii. xiii.

been approached. The existence of matter discovered in perception is made a primary fact, while the prior fact of consciousness, the sensation or perception which discovers it, is virtually denied. "Every sensation is nothing more than the shock given to the organs; every perception is this shock propagated to the brain."[1]

13. But the least attention may show that on such a question as the origin and nature of existence, the more simple a theory is, the less likely to be true; and the more it pretends to explain, the less are its pretensions to be relied on. Take the last step of the process of sensation. Feeling and thought are certain movements of the brain. The answer has been given by many a writer and by many a reader, but is too important to need apology for its repetition, that physical impressions, however necessary to sensation, are not sensation; and though it could be proved that every mental operation is attended by movements of the brain, still motion is not thought; but that physical impressions and motions are something totally different from sensations and thoughts, and incommensurable with them. The nerves and the brain might move to all eternity, and change their movements every day and hour; but there could be no sensation or thought if there were not something present, which we call mind, though we know not what it is in itself, which has the peculiar power of sensibility to these movements, and possesses its own specific faculty of thought.

Mind, we have said, is an unknown something. The expression is indefinite, but we must speak in similar terms of matter also. We know nothing of either except their properties or effects; and those of mind, feeling, thought, will, are so totally different from those of matter, extension, hardness, divisibility, that we can never pass from either to the other, nor discover any connection or relation between them.

14. The materialist pretends to have solved the problem of existence before he has removed the mystery from the meanest thing. He has mastered a true theory of the universe! Let him explain the existence of a pebble. It is something divisible; all matter is divisible; but can it be divided *in infinitum*, or does it consist of a finite number of infinitely hard indivisible atoms? It has a cer-

[1] "System," &c. i. viii.

tain color; but this depends on the sensibility of the mind and the properties of light. It attracts, then, and is attracted, according to the universal law of matter; but this, after all, is only a force. At all events, it has a certain size and shape—we can not divest it of its extension. No; we can not while it remains, but we can suppose every thing removed except extension, and then the whole matter is removed; so that even if we could refute the idealist when he affirms that space is but the necessary form of the intuition and is nothing out of the mind, even though extension be something real and absolute, yet extension does not imply extended substance. The properties of matter describe, then, only its appearances in sensation, not what it is in itself.

15. Various well-known systems of materialism have been current in the world. The grossest form is that which converts the sensible appearance into a reality, and immediately loses sight of the diversities of qualities which alone constitute that appearance, regarding them as inessential to the matter itself, and continually generated and corrupted. This is what is called the hylopathian atheism, and appears to have been that of Anaximander.[1]

The hylozoic system, to avoid the absurdity of deriving life from dead matter, ascribes a certain latent life and understanding to all matter, and derives all sensitive and rational souls from the life concealed in matter.[2]

Anaxagoras, to avoid the creation of the different qualities of matter out of nothing, as in the hylopathian atheism, invented what is called his homœomery, which supposes that all the various qualities and properties of matter have belonged eternally to its atoms, which "were originally endued with all those forms and qualities that are vulgarly conceived to be in bodies, some bony, some fleshy, some fiery, some watery, some white, some black, some bitter, some sweet, and the like."[3] But Anaxagoras was not an atheist. His system was a dualism, that of an eternal mind fashioning the eternal matter. This is what we might expect from his theory of matter itself: for if qualities be ingenerable out of nothing, mind at all events must be ingenerable and eternal. But

[1] Cudworth's Intell. Sys., Harrison's ed. vol. iii. p. 408.
[2] Ib. i. p. 106. [3] Ib. i. p. 65

atheistic materialists have held the homœomery without the uncreated mind. Matter may have all the eternal qualities it may require, provided it want no mind before their own. This, according to some accounts, was Anaximander's notion.

The atomism of Democritus was probably founded on the preceding. It pretended to derive all nature, mental as well as material, from the fortuitous concourse of atoms, and is therefore essentially atheistic. Such appears to be the true account of his system. He divested the atoms of Anaxagoras of all their qualities except figure. They are still corporeal, still extended and divisible. They are also diverse from one another in figure. Plenum and vacuum are the first principles of all things: what is unextended is nothing. The different kinds of matter, and minds also, are supposed, then, to be generated by atoms of different figure combining in different ways, and to be corrupted by their segregation. The soul and fire are said to consist of spherical atoms.[1]

Cudworth makes mention of another system of material atheism, which he supposes to be a degenerate offshoot from the system of the Stoics. The characteristic tenet of the Stoical school is known to have been its "soul of the world," a certain animal soul and conscious intelligent mind, supposed to preside over the whole world, and to lodge immediately in the fiery matter of it. This was to make the world a huge sentient and rational animal. It gives, however, a pantheistic rather than an atheistic theory, and is called by Cudworth "a kind of spurious theism, or theism disguised in a paganic dress."[2]

[1] This account of Democritus' opinions is founded on passages of Aristotle quoted by Cudworth (vol. i. p. 14). If accurate, Mr. Lewis is mistaken in concluding (Biog. Hist. vol. i. p. 152) that because Democritus repudiated the qualities of Anaxagoras, he therefore divested his atoms of all sensible properties, and reduced them to forces, thus anticipating the monadology of Leibnitz, and enunciating a dynamical theory of existence. The monads of Leibnitz are intelligible forces, without figure, unextended, indivisible. (Monadol. § 1–3). They are in no sense material, as he repeatedly insists. He says of the old philosophers, "Ces anciens étoient plus solides qu'on ne croit," but that they anticipated his own profound speculations must require proof. Leibnitz was a Christian philosopher; the reader of Mr. Lewis's History will hardly learn that he was a theist.

[2] Vol. i. p. 194.

But some speculators, it appears—more alive to the absurdity of making the world itself a living intelligent being, than to the demand of reason for a Great Being superior to it—degraded it from the rank of an animal to that of a huge plant, "a body endued with one plastic or spermatic nature, branching out the whole orderly and methodically, but without any understanding or sense." Cudworth is of opinion that Seneca and the younger Pliny were disposed to this pseudo-stoical atheism. It differs from the system of Anaximander in its ascribing a certain unity of organization, or one common plastic life, like that of a plant, to the whole world.

16. It were a useless task to seek either to scare the theist with the monsters of defunct atheism, or to hold the modern atheist responsible for exploded theories, much less for such a theory as the preceding, which seems hardly ever to have found acceptance. But, unfortunately, we have not to raise spectres from the grave. These old systems are still alive, and are as far forward as ever in the service of dogmatic atheism.

That of "the system of nature" differs very little from the atheistic or the material homœomery, ascribed by some writers to Anaximander, which makes matter with all its qualities to be eternal. "It is an unintelligible jargon," says the author, "to call matter an unique being; it is a *genus* of beings." Mind, however, has no such prerogative as the common qualities of matter. It possesses no such permanent existence, but is something generable and corruptible, and therefore quite inferior in being to the sensible qualities which have no existence without it!

But the writer has no objection to the hylozoic theory. He finds the want of something of the kind when he comes to the sensibility of the mind, although he had previously been quite content with matter, and qualities, and motion. He considers that it is the brain which makes the difference between man and the beasts. But he here stumbles upon an unfortunate fact. "The sensibility of the brain is a fact." Yes, and how is it to be got rid of? "If it be asked, whence comes this property, we shall reply, it is the result of an arrangement, of a combination peculiar to the animal; insomuch that coarse insensible matter ceases to be

so by animalizing itself, that is to say, by combining and identifying itself with the animal."[1]

Materialism is wont to offer us husks for food, and to deceive the ignorant with words in the deplorable dearth of ideas. But the attempt is seldom so undisguised as it is here. Our author is naturally afraid that this "animalizing itself," however it may impose upon sottish minds, will hardly satisfy the half wise. So, for their sake, he is obliged to have recourse to the hylozoic fancy. "Some philosophers think that insensibility is a universal quality of matter. If this hypothesis be admitted, then, to animalise a substance is only to destroy the obstacles that prevent its being active or sensible."[2]

"Some philosophers think." There is an odd resemblance between the ancient and modern atheisms. Both of them are afraid that a little thought will convince mankind that something more is wanted than matter and motion; both are driven to the hylozoic notion that all matter has life, only it is not brought out in all; but no one can be found among ancient or modern atheists who will be responsible for the figment. Of the hylozoism of ancient philosophy it has been said, that "this kind of atheism seems to be but an unshapen embryo of some dark and cloudy brains, that was never yet digested into an entire system, nor could be brought into any such tolerable form as to have the confidence to show itself abroad in full and open view."[3] And in modern atheism we have still the same unshapen embryo introduced to us with "some philosophers think," and left to be entertained by such "dark and cloudy brains" as may be able to take it in. If the author had read what he somewhere calls the metaphysical romances of Cudworth, he might have found in them enough of sound and sober sense to save him from this metaphysical escapade.

17. But the most popular materialism of the present day is that which has been connected with the theory of development.[4] It is not intended to represent this theory, at least in its application

[1] Pt. i. c. viii. [2] Ibid. [3] Cudworth, i. 107.

[4] Some valuable hints from Professor Powell have led me to aim at expressing, with more distinctness and consistency, what was intended in this branch of the subject.

to the material world, as incompatible either with theism or with Christianity. On the contrary, it may be expected, if it should be fully established, to afford a most striking manifestation of the eternal order and consistency of the Divine conduct, and the unity of the Divine plan in creation. The stability of material laws and forces, which, after myriads of years, continue to evolve their innumerable results in a harmonious universe, will offer a more splendid view of the agency of infinite intelligence than can be gained in the observation of particular instances of design. Such a material philosophy will put an end, at all events, to the reign of *chance*, one of the deities of atheists; as perhaps a sounder mental philosophy may confine *fatalism* to material causes, and so limit the authority of their other deity.

But a development theory is easily delivered into the service of skepticism by the rashness of an eager generalization. Sound principles of mental and moral philosophy are not less essential than comprehensiveness and accuracy of physical observation and induction. Some of these principles may possibly be suggested by considering a work which has excited great attention—"The Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation."

18. This work makes a constant and reverent profession of theism, and there can be no question of the author's sincerity. A theory of progressive creation and development, though often made the basis of atheism, is quite compatible with true theism, provided the forces of nature be regarded as subordinate to the First Cause of all, and the law of development as the law of the Divine agency. But the mechanical fatalism of the work is certainly atheistic.

The theory of the "Vestiges" considers the world as it is, with all its varieties of living and rational beings, and even the whole universe of the solar system, to have commenced from some simple condition of mere material existence, and to have advanced progressively, in accordance with natural and material laws, to its present order and intelligence. The laws of progress are confessed to be ordained and directed by the Creative Intelligence and Beneficence; but notwithstanding this, they are represented as the unswerving laws of mechanical causes, and as binding the

universe both of matter and mind in the chains of causal necessity.

The greater part of the work is devoted to the theory of development. Let us commence from man, the highest work of creation, and descend from this to the most simple. We find that "the ordinary mental manifestations are looked upon as simple phenomena resulting from organization, those of the lower animals being absolutely the same in character, though developed within narrower limits."[1] Reason is developed in man in all possible degrees, from the intelligence of Newton down to the lowest conditions of savage life. "A Cuvier and a Newton are but expansions of a clown." In like manner, the instincts of animals descend by slow gradations from the sagacity of the dog, or the skill and industry of the bee, to the torpid condition which can hardly be distinguished from mere vegetable life. In fact, it is impossible to draw the line between the two kingdoms; some forms belong as easily to the one as to the other.

We may thus descend a grand staircase of nature, and may go yet lower in the scale of being. The various classes of the vegetable world rise to higher or lower conditions of organization, and the lowest can not be distinguished from unorganized matter. The intellectual world appears to have been derived from the animal, this from the vegetable, and this again from the mineral world, through the agencies and progressions of natural causes. We thus come down from rational beings to dead matter. In the material world itself, we are easily carried back to an epoch when the earth was a confused chaos of hot rocks and mud, of water and dense fog; and beyond this, till it is but a huge red-hot meteoric stone at so high a temperature that all the waters of the ocean were suspended in an atmosphere of mist, or rising from the ground and falling back to it in an incessant deluge of mist and rain. A step farther, and the huge mass was a globe of molten granite, revolving as now upon its axis, and acquiring by its revolution the spheroidal form which it still retains. Take a few more ages of the past eternity, and the liquid mass must have been vapor. It is more than probable that the vapor was diffused

[1] 8th ed. p. 252.

over a large space, and that the great void was once filled with a uniform fire-mist. In distant regions of space, such fire-mists are said to exist even now. Many of the stellar nebulæ are unconsolidated fogs of fire.

We arrive, then, at a time when "the whole of our firmament was a diffused mass of nebulous matter." We must not expect in this haze of nature to see how things go; but "if from any peculiarity in the constitution nuclei are formed, the neighboring matter will be aggregated to these nuclei, and masses more or less solid will be detatched from the rest." And as the matter is collected to a centre, a rotary motion will be established, just as we see "on so humble a scale as the water sinking through a funnel."[1]

The geology and natural philosophy of this able and popular work have been sufficiently examined, and scarcely fall within the purpose of our subject. There can be no doubt of the gradual development of the material world. It has not arisen into being in its present condition, but through a progressive creation by law. But even as regards the world of matter, it has been made evident that much is to be learned to put us in possession of a scientific system of cosmogony; far more before it will be possible to say whether, in any degree, and how far, the system of development can be applied to living beings.

19. We are more concerned with the philosophy of development, on which a few points demand attention.

Having arrived by gradual descent at a primæval fire-mist, an important question remains respecting the extension of our journey. Whence came this fog of fire, and what are its powers and properties? Suppose it to be true that universal nature has passed through a development of countless millenniums, are we through all of them to hold to our first principle, "Nothing out of nothing," "Every thing which happens must have its cause?" If so, then each preceding state must have contained the germs or causes of all the succeeding, or must have advanced to them under the agency of a Superior Cause. May we assume this, then, to be the

[1] These passages are from an early edition, and appear to have been altered or expunged. But we have to deal with principles, not any particular book.

truth? The religious bearing of the system depends mainly upon this question. Without an answer the development is reduced, at the best, and if all its assumptions be true, to a mere continuous succession. It is nothing but an amusement of phantasmagoria, a set of dissolving views which follow one another, but whether with any connection or dependence is left to the spectator's conjectures and his perplexity.

It were to be wished that the author had given us some information upon the nature of this fire-mist; whether it were hylozoic, or homœomerian, or atomic; whether it were uniform in its properties; whether the germs of all the diverse qualities of things were diffused throughout it, or attached to particular particles, or altogether wanting. A sweep of thought so universal as the "Vestiges" ought not to leave us, after all, as ignorant of existence as before. It will surely condescend to notice the question whether it were really "unintelligible jargon," as we have been told, "to call matter a unique being," and whether it consisted even in the fire-mist of "a genus of beings." We can not help falling on the question, "Where is the electricity now, which is to work such wonders after myriads of centuries, by secreting thought and feeling in the nervous organism of man?"

It may be pleaded that this inquiry was foreign to the author's purpose. He sought to trace the course and law of development, not to account for all its causes. But some of his readers, who have descended with him thus far, may have felt disposed to prolong the journey to the end. Many who have arrived at the fire-mist may have thought themselves already at the end, regarding a haze as little better than nonentity, and may have expressed their feeling in some such conclusion as, "It can have required a very slight effort of creative power to produce this." And, in fact, there is a current system of atheism which maintains the leading doctrines of the "Vestiges," but discovers in them no indication of a Creator.

20. A few observations are therefore requisite on the *atheistic* system of material development. If it be maintained that the steps we have taken down the descending scale of nature were not mere changes of form, but deprivations of essential qualities and

properties; unless all the powers of the world as it is were originally latent in the fire-mist; we may as easily go on from this to nonentity, as we have effected the former descent from a more complex condition of being to a more simple. Matter is known by its properties, and thus only; and the primæval fog may as easily have received its few properties from nothing, as aggregate from nothing new powers which had not belonged to it.

The author of the "Vestiges" would repudiate this construction of his system, although he goes so far as to regard not only the different states of the visible world, but even the mind of man, as a product of material development. He speaks of mental action as electrical;[1] and it is possible certainly that a movement of electricity or other nervous fluid may be essential, in the present existence of man, to every action of the mind. Yet *thought will still be something beyond electricity.* If this plain truth be forgotten, if it be not stated, and stated prominently, the development theory is at once surrendered to the skeptic. He will press the question, and with reason: "What then can we know of the Divine mind? Must not this also be a development from materialism? If intelligence, affections, will, in man be nothing more than electric or similar movements, must it not follow that the marks of intelligent design in the world can prove no more than the existence of a world-spirit, in the electric or similar agent of the mundane sphere; and must they not fail to lead us to a Being who transcends nature?"

We shall thus be brought back to the spurious theism of the Stoical system, with its "Soul of the world" residing in the fiery matter of it. It is fair to admit that this doctrine is disclaimed[2] by the author of the "Vestiges," but others may hold it in connection with his system, and may think perhaps that they are more consistent. A similar opinion has recently been revived in other quarters. It may be met with in works on mesmerism and kindred subjects, and is the natural refuge of defeated materialists. It is sure to bring with it its old attendant, the cosmo-plastic atheism, which makes the world to resemble a plant rather than a living animal. They who have persuaded themselves that the func-

[1] Ed. 8, p. 255, and note 100.

[2] Ed. 8, p. 10.

tions of the mind are nothing but electrical motions, may still be slow to believe that similar functions are performed by the electricity of the massive inert globe! It is not easy to be persuaded that this huge earth possesses a soul, and feels and reflects like a man. Electricity may excite muscular movement, and the operation of digestion in the human body, but it performs no such offices in the globe; and, moreover, the world is destitute of that wondrous organism, which divides with electricity the mental domain of man—the system of the brain and nerves.

This form of atheism which holds the world to be not an animal, but like a great plant, having what Cudworth calls "one spermatic or plastic nature which orders the whole without conscious reason or understanding," "is hinted to us," he says, "in that doubtful passage of Seneca's—'Whether the world be endued with one sentient rational life, or whether it be only a body governed by nature like trees and other plants.'" But Seneca is careful to remind us that "whatsoever, from the beginning to the end of it, it can either do or suffer, was all at first included in the nature of the whole."[1] It is only on this condition that Seneca will affirm with the author of the "Vestiges" that "the original and first rudiments of the world contained in them not only the sun and moon, the courses of the stars, and the generation of animals, but also the vicissitudes of all terrestrial things."

21. If this plain truth be forgotten, if it be imagined that the universe may have been developed by natural law, yet not have contained in its primæval state the causes of all its developments; if new qualities and properties are superadded at each stage, which were neither resident in the original matter, nor are introduced by supernatural agency; and if, as will then be the case, a slight effort of creative power had been sufficient to give existence to the fire-mist, we then fall on something more like the old system of Anaximander than the preceding. We are in this case asked to believe that the vast universe before our eyes, with all its beauties

[1] "Sive anima est mundus, sive corpus natura gubernante ut arbores et sata."

"Ab initio ejus usque ad exitum, quicquid facere, quicquid pati debeat inclusum est." (Nat. Quæst. iii. 29. Cudworth, i. p. 193, 194.)

and sublimities, has grown by its own powers from an original condition of simple matter, which may as easily be supposed to have accomplished the wonderful feat of self-creation out of nothing—to have achieved the first little step into being — the first inconceivably small advance from nothing to something, in the slow and painful labor of an elapsed eternity. On such a hypothesis the "vestiges of creation" become footsteps backward into nonentity. Such is the course of thought: of being itself one would wish, though fearfully, that the labor of an eternity may not be lost, the progress not become regressive; that the footsteps, thus far happily in the right direction, may continue—

"Omnia *me* adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum."

These vestiges of self-creation lead us to something very like the system of Anaximander. We have been brought back to his mysterious first principle, the infinite (*τὸ ἄπειρον*), which has been such a puzzle to philosophers. Some have understood this to be an Infinite Being; others, that it is unbounded matter (a diffused fire-mist); others, that it is something still more primitive — infinite and empty space; and others, again, that it is a word founded on the common confusion between subjective and objective, a mere abstract term, which he fancied to mean something, but which really means nothing.

It is worth notice, for its curiosity, that his cosmogony is very like the "Vestiges" in its details. He "affirmed the heavens and the infinite worlds to have arisen by segregation from the infinite; and that at the generation of the world a certain sphere of fire encompassed the air which surrounds the earth, as a bark doth a tree; and that when this sphere was broken up, and divided into spherical bodies, there sprung from it the sun, moon, and stars."[1] This is precisely the cosmogony of the "Vestiges," due allowance being made for the change of astronomical science. We have the

[1] *Τὸ ἄπειρον . . . ἐξ οὗ δή φησι τούς τε οὐρανοὺς ἀποκεκρίσθαι, καὶ καθόλου τοὺς ἅπαντας ἀπείρους ὄντας κόσμους· φησὶ δὲ κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν τοῦδε τοῦ κόσμου . . . τινα φλογὸς σφαῖραν περιφυῆναι τῷ περὶ τὴν γῆν ἀέρι, ὡς τῷ δένδρῳ φλοιόν· ἧς τινος ἀποῤῥαγείσης, καὶ εἰς τινας ἀποκλεισθείσης κύκλους, ὑποστῆναι τὸν ἥλιον, καὶ τὴν σελήνην, καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας.* (Euseb. Evang. Præp. lib. i. quoted by Cudworth, i. p. 187.)

diffused simple matter, the segregation to "nuclei," the fiery matter surrounding the central body, and breaking up into attendant spheres.

But this is not all. It is the beginning of the present phase of things, the passage from the infinite unknown to the universe. We learn from Plutarch that the same philosopher imagined "the first animals to have been generated in moisture, and encompassed with thorny backs." So that the development of plants into animals is no novelty, after all! But still more remarkable, we have also the development of animals into men—"Man was generated at first from animals of other kinds;" and to complete the parallel, "Anaximander concludes that men were at first generated in fishes."[1]

But self-creation is too preposterous to gain credence, and we shall find conclusive evidence against the eternity of matter. Suffice it here to observe, that unless the successive progressions have been effected through a supernatural agency similar to that which must be acknowledged in its commencement, the primæval matter must have contained the germs or causes of all future developments in itself. We must either acknowledge a Creator, or regard matter with all its powers as eternal. It is nonsense to imagine that the creation of the fire-mist could be easier or more simple than that of the world as it is. We can not say that less power will create the acorn than the oak. Indeed, there is nothing more marvelous and mysterious in nature than the various and hidden properties of the innumerable seeds of plants, in virtue of which, though to the eye they be scarcely discernible from grains of sand, they are developed under the requisite conditions, and shoot forth each of them to the production of its own kind. We need not regard the taunt of atheism, that the power of God is the refuge of ignorance. Man's unknown will always infinitely exceed his known, but he may know that the complement of his knowledge is in a Being superior to himself.

[1] Ἀναξίμανδρος ἐν ὑγρῷ γεννηθῆναι τὰ πρῶτα ζῶα, φλοιοῖς περιεχόμενα ἀκανθώδεσι. (Pl. Plac. Phil. lib. i. cap. xix. Cudworth, ib.)

Ἐξ ἀλλοειδῶν ζώων ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐγεννήθη. (Euseb. Ev. Præp. lib. i.)

Ἀναξίμανδρος ἐν ἰχθύσιν ἐγγενέσθαι τὸ πρῶτον ἀνθρώπους ἀποφαίνεται. (Pl. *Symp. lib. viii.* Q. 8.)

22. A development theory must therefore assume, that in the ascending scale of being, the causes of all change and progress were either communicated by the Creator to the original matter, or have been continually superadded by Divine Power, whether through occasional interventions or by continuous agency may be, in the main, but a secondary question.[1] If the scale were complete from the lowest to the highest forms of being, if it were ascertained that the lower orders are uniformly senior to the higher, yet it would not follow that these are mere material or natural developments of the former. That many of the actions and instincts of animals resemble actions and faculties of men, affords no foundation for the inference that man possesses no peculiar faculties of his own, that "the difference between the mind in the lower animals and in man is a difference in degree only."[2] The mind can not avoid the conclusion that a creative energy, beyond that which gave being to matter, is requisite for introducing life and intelligence to the world. If it were even known that there had been a constant and regular progression of material and living beings, we could not conclude that there had been a development of mind *from* matter, but only *in* matter. We have, in fact, precisely the same difficulty in accounting for the origin of mind in matter, as for the origin of matter in empty space. We have no more warrant for seeking the first causes of intelligence in body, than for seeking the causes of body in nonentity. Thus a refutation of these systems of atheism rests in the all-important, original, undeniable truth, that there is an impassable gulf between the facts of mental consciousness and any conceivable movements, however subtile, of matter or electricity.

We may allow that there has been progress in the material world, we may have confidence in the mental progress of mankind, yet still consider it premature, to say the very least, to combine the two progressions in one course of nature, when the only ground for the passage from the inorganic to the organic worlds—to say nothing of the more difficult passage to intelligence—is

[1] It may be known or conjectured that these different *notions* of the Divine agency have no ultimate difference of objective signification, and are all equally true.

[2] Vestiges, p. 256.

the doubly vague conjecture, founded on an announcement made "some years ago by Prevost and Dumas, *that globules could be produced in albumen by electricity.*" "If, therefore," our author reasons, by a logic which *may* certainly be electrical, so fitful and sudden are its movements, "If these globules be identical with the cells which are now held to be reproductive, it might be said that the production of albumen by artificial means is the only step in the process wanting. This has not yet been effected; but it is known to be only a chemical process, the mode of which may be any day discovered in the laboratory."

Two steps, then, are to be taken in passing from the unorganized to the organized; the production of albumen, which has not (yet) been effected, and the production therein of reproductive globules, which has also not been effected.[1] As to the globules of Dumas, we may as well believe in reproductive soap-bubbles.

In these observations it has been attempted to show, that a theory of development can not be serviceable to skepticism, unless it be founded on false principles of philosophy, and at variance with necessary truths. If some parts of the "Vestiges" have this tendency, such a work can lay claim to great indulgence. Religious reformers have been liable to extravagance, and it is not to be expected that the pioneers of scientific progress will all at once hit upon the exact line of truth. Even the material fatalism of the work is not a necessary consequence of creation by law. If it be possible that man may have received from one creative act an originating power of his own, it is possible, as far as we can know, that such a power may have arisen through a causal progression from a simpler state of being. But the ground on which

[1] The experiments of Messrs. Cross and Weekes profess to give us a fact, but it is equally uncertain. The arguments *pro* and *con* appear equally inconclusive. Even if it could be shown that matter and electricity are sufficient for automatous animals, yet we are as far as ever from the human soul with all its faculties. But let the curious by all means continue their experiments. Truth will never suffer from investigation. Religion is but ill founded when it is jealous of science. As yet the question seems to be very much where it was when Malebranche wrote (Entret. xi. 8): "Ne nous arrêtons pas, je vous prie, aux preuves qu'on donne qu'il y a des animaux qui viennent de pourriture; car elles sont si faibles, ces preuves, qu'elles ne méritent point de réponse."

the author rests his opinion upon this momentous question is scarcely such as to demand farther notice.

23. To conclude this subject: even though the theory were proved true from first to last, though the scale of beings, from the fire-mist to the world of thought and affection, were shown to be continuous and unbroken, yet the retort of the idealist is still applicable and unanswerable. He has as much right to say that matter is an action or evolution of the mind, as that mind is an action or evolution of matter. The material world, it is true, is prior in time to the finite mind of a man; but, as Berkeley represents, it may be a continued Divine energy upon the succession of created minds. Common sense answers both idealism and materialism with equal force when it affirms, that since the two entities, mind and matter, are in all human knowledge totally distinct and incommensurable, there is as good reason to attribute independent existence to the one as to the other. No progress of science, no knowledge of facts, and laws, and developments, has advanced us a step toward the solution of this mystery. It can, therefore, be only superficial to account for the origin of mind by any analogy drawn from the material world. It were simpler, and perhaps wiser, to argue, that since the two worlds are totally separate so far as known, the separation extends farther to the unknown. We shall find abundant reason to conclude, that whatever be the age of the world, whatever may have been its past history, it can not, *as matter*, be self-existent, but must be subordinate to a Being superior to all the relations and conditions under which alone it can be known to us.

24. The learned Dr. Cudworth, in his examination of the ancient systems of atheism, which we find still extant in the world, points out their inconsistencies with one another, and finds atheism to be "a certain strange kind of monster with four heads, that are all of them perpetually biting, tearing, and devouring one another." He is speaking of the Anaximandrian, the Democritic, the Stoical or cosmo-plastic, and the Stratonical or hylozoic systems. These are all systems of coarse materialism, mere variations of the dirt-philosophy. "All atheists," he adds, "are mere corporealists, who in that dull and earthly disbelief or confounded sottishness of

mind, which makes them deny a God, must needs be inclined to deny all incorporeal substance also."

But this remark is no longer strictly true. Modern speculation has founded skeptical systems on idealism as well as on corporealism. In denying the existence of the Infinite First Cause, atheism brings itself under the necessity of deifying the finite and subordinate. Nothing so common as to deify the human faculties. Atheistical materialism exalts the sensations to the throne of Deity; idealism, when pressed into atheism, is the deification of the reason.

25. Idealism narrows the great inquiry of theism, by divesting it of all question upon the impossibility of conceiving an immaterial substance. This was the difficulty of Hobbes, who affirmed all existence to be corporeal, and pretended to believe in a corporeal God, the first mover of eternally-existing matter. He maintained that the ancients possessed no such notion as that conveyed by our word "spirit," and even derives the notion from the abstract terms of the schoolmen.[1] He was infected with what Cudworth calls "the pneumatophobia, a certain kind of madness peculiar to the atheists, that makes them have an irrational but desperate abhorrence from spirits or incorporeal substances." He did not see that he had no right to regard that material world, in which he placed all the reality of life, as having any more substantial existence than the enchanted castle, or the palace of Aladdin. He overlooked the fact that it is known only as a world of appearance, a world which the close approach of idealism discovers to rest upon causes not conceivable under any material form, and which may at any time, through the decay of these causes, in a moment vanish into air. The world abideth, but by unseen influences. The very ghost which the materialist dreads is not only a reality, but is in occupation of his castle, and keeps the secret spell of its continuance. Its height, its thickness, its strength, the inertia and all the properties of the materials, are only so many impressions upon his mind; beyond these it is only in deep occult causes, which are no longer corporeal, that the existence of the world can be affirmed.

[1] Dr. Hampden ought to have seen to this.

26. There are, perhaps, few skeptical materialists who hold a deeper and more subtile theory of matter than those we have considered; but traces of such a speculation are to be met with. If the atoms of Democritus (§ 15) be divested of the property of figure, but supposed to retain the attribute of force, the doctrine approximates to the "monadology" of Leibnitz. But this great Christian philosopher, it need hardly be said, was far removed from an atomic atheism, or any other form of skepticism or materialism. His system is no longer a material atomism, but a purely intellectual theory of the universe. His monads are not inert, nor extended, nor passive material atoms, but primitive forces, which are the first principles of things. The Supreme Being is the Creator of all these primitive forces, and the First Cause of all things.[1]

If we consider what must be implied in the assertion that nothing exists but matter, we shall find that it goes deeper than appears at first sight. To have meaning at all, it must signify that those unknown and subtile causes which give rise to the appearances of the material, give rise also to those of the mental world. This is as much as to say that the *substratum* of matter, if the word may be employed, is identical with that of mind; or, in other words, that two existing things, which in all their manifestations are totally distinct from one another, are yet identical in their unknown reality. But two things which are wholly unknown in themselves can not be known to exist in the same way, or with any community of properties or attributes. In all cognition they are evidently and totally distinct: what warrant can be found, except that of superficial confidence and bold assertion, for declaring them identical beyond the reach of cognition? If any one think to account for existence by a system of monads, he will find that more than one kind of force is necessary for the material world, much more for the totally diverse mental world. He will be involved in most of the difficulties of grosser materialists if he do

[1] "Toutes les monades ont reçu leur origine de Dieu et en dépendent." Nouv. Ess. iv. x. Art. 19.

"Dieu est le premier raison des choses." Theod. Discours, &c. § 7, Monadol. § 38, &c.

not recognize the necessity of theism as the basis of his scheme of speculation.

If no more be intended by the assertor of materialism than that, for any thing that we know, some of the forces which result in the existence of matter are the same as those of mind, we can only reply that it may be so. It may possibly be an objetive truth, corresponding to the common belief of many Christians, that both spirits and matter are in some way dependent for their preservation on the abiding providence of God.

27. These observations bear upon the common difficulty of conceiving it possible that inert gross matter can have been created by a Spiritual Being. This question is not always thought to be answered, as one might expect, by observing in every action of man that heavy matter is moved by something too subtile to be discovered by the senses. Some may imagine that they elucidate the doctrine of creation by the theory of development from a simple condition of mist and electricity, which are objects apparently less remote than grosser matter from our ordinary conception of spirit. But the difficulty is superficial. It is only *to us* that matter is massive, and heavy, and inert. In itself, and without reference to the senses, it may be conceived to be as spiritual as even spirit. We do not want the long journey of geological ages to pass from the material to the immaterial; there is still a wide chasm between them when we have gone back so far; and it may be approached as closely by a few steps into the present reality of things.

28. In questions of this kind, it is necessary to distinguish between what is called a *dynamical theory* of material existence and a dynamical theory of perception. That of existence can be no more than a hypothesis; the other is an unquestionable truth. The action of the outward world upon the nervous system gives rise to sensation, and is dynamical. The primitive perception of the mind is that of the resulting action and reaction. The motions of light, whether emanations or undulations, strike the optic nerve, the waves of air communicate their movements to the nervous labyrinth of the ear, and the corresponding sensations are occasioned. Touch results from movements produced by slight pressure. Similar actions, or others like the minute movements of chemical

forces, excite the sensations of taste and smell. All the sensations consist in the effects of these nervous movements upon the sensibility. But it does not follow that the *existence* of the objects of perception consists in these actions or their forces, any more than in their results upon the mind. The coarser materialism represents the sensations themselves as the external objects, and builds its system on the first gross conceptions. A little reflection is enough to dispel this delusion. It were equally unwarrantable to identify the existence of objects with the dynamical actions which give rise to the sensations.

29. We may conceive that underneath the causes which give us the perceptions of matter, there is another action and reaction of forces imperceptible to the common observation, arising, for instance, from some of the subtile fluids which pervade the universe, and resulting in the potencies which present the world of phenomena to the senses. This might be called a dynamical theory of existence. It is a conceivable theory, and one which science might discover to be true. The existence of inert matter may be imagined to consist in the mutual action of such fluids in statical equilibrium, and the force of gravitation to be an unemployed resultant of their forces. The stable equilibrium of the action during the enormous period of material being would be something still more wonderful than the stability of the astronomical movements, but more wonderful rather in degree than in kind.

If such a theory were established, the farther question would still remain, what are these fluids in themselves? Are they independently existent, or in perpetual dependence on a Superior Being? Is there an absolute beginning with themselves, or do they, some or all of them, flow forth continually from the great fountain of all subordinate being? Science may advance much farther than it has yet done, and may approach nearer to the essential nature of corporeal substance; but questions of this kind will ever lie beyond its sphere.

CHAPTER V.

ATHEISM.

SECTION I.

DOGMATIC OR POSITIVE ATHEISM.

1. Assumes Fate or Chance.—2. One First Cause or many.—3. Many Primitive Substances.—4. Letters of the Iliad.

ATHEISM can find no solid foundations in materialism. The various materialist theories are unable to support themselves. It is necessary to make some observations on its inherent weakness and insufficiency.

1. Positive atheism pretends to change the negation which Holy Scripture assigns to the heart into a dogmatical denial, and to establish it on principles of reason; asserting that the facts of experience can be combined and accounted for, without reference to a First Cause of all.

But in the place of one First Cause, it is obliged to have recourse to many; and having no author of their arrangement, nor ordainer of their mutual adaptations, it is obliged to assign them to *chance*, or to a course of nature, which is a blind *fate*.

These, however, are mere subjective notions, and have no real meaning. Every effect, every phenomenon and combination of separate phenomena, must have its cause, and that not only in its parts, but as a whole. Fate or chance are mere words, and give no account of the combinations. They are inadequate, in any sense they can bear, to be causes of the order of the universe. They are so repugnant to common reason and so manifestly insufficient, that the untutored mind instinctively rejects them, and the most competent thinkers will dismiss them from consideration with a brief remark. They can impose upon none but the half-wise.

The manifold defects and inconsistencies of atheism will be

more fully exposed by the direct arguments of theism. A few remarks on this particular difficulty may first be offered.

2. The question of theism or atheism is that of one First Cause or many: one First Cause of all being, combining, harmonizing, and governing all subordinate things; or many first causes independent of one another, and without cause of their combination and harmony: One Great Cause, transcending indeed all human cognition and conception; or many partial causes, commending themselves to our notice and apprehension because they resemble those subordinate causes which we see around us, but yet as to their secret nature equally incomprehensible with the One Cause: One, who can contain in His immensity the adequate causes of all things; or many, finite and limited, which are only more ordinary and obvious to be demonstrably insufficient.

Every material theory is insufficient which does not rest upon a First Cause of all reality. However subtile may be its agents in the field of nature, however refined and ideal its conceptions, it can never escape from the causal law, nor avoid the admission of a diversity in the acting causes, corresponding to the diversity of effects or appearance. On a dynamical theory of existence, if the acting forces be regarded as self-existent, there must be some diversity in these forces, and they must be numerous. We can have no reason to assign why there may not be infinite possibilities of being. In actual being, every distinct particle of matter in the infinity of space must exist in virtue of its own peculiar forces; and every difference of the innumerable particles which compose the universe must be referred to a difference in the eternal forces themselves, or in the mutual actions of different forces upon one another.

This is a conceivable theory of a created universe. But to imagine it to exist without a First Cause and paramount Lord of all, is to take up with a theory which, however refined it may be as a speculation, is only conceivable as loaded with difficulty, in its inability to account for the combinations and arrangements of things; and will be farther shown to be inconsistent with reason, in demanding for its support infinite chains of already past causes.

We may suppose an atheistic system to take the form of a

monadology or a refined atomism, and to reduce all being to a system of simple irresolvable forces. Let us notice some of the difficulties of such a system. The same observations will apply to a theory of common materialism, with its "genus of beings."

3. To account, then, for the existence of the universe as bare material substance, without regard to its form or duty; to account for even a vast chaos of matter, unordered and uncombined, we require a large number, and we can assign no reason why, in a universe unlimited in space and time, there might not be an infinite number of these primitive forces all eternal and self-existent.

But forces, or atoms, or whatever be the primitive elements of matter, these, in any number, will not give us the bare corporeal substance of the universe, much less the universe as it is. They will not even construct a chaos, without some relations to one another which they must possess eternally. A single monad or force can not constitute a perceptible particle of matter. To give even the smallest particle, even the least grain of sand, there must be a mutual relation and combined action of the forces.

The difficulties of atheism are vastly increased when we take account of the immense extent, the endless variety, the marvelous order and beauty of the universe. What a wondrous combination of forces does it present to us! Consider the material world alone: its heavy matter, and its potent agencies of hidden fluids which have been unknown for ages; its sluggish waters and its limpid light; the globe of the earth, with all its varieties of matter, and the fixed relations of its different substances; the vault of the firmament, with its million suns—all bound together in one harmonious whole, and obedient, through endless ages, to laws which are never broken. What an immense number of forces and combinations of forces must act together to give existence to all the various substances of the universe, the genus of beings in heaven and earth: how many conditions to combine them in one whole: how many more to make it an abiding and orderly whole: how many more to direct and control the distinct agencies of nature through ages of ages, to bring contemporaneously into action the properties of matter organized and unorganized, the soil, the seed, the moisture, the air, the light, the

heat, the electricity, which must co-operate to produce the food of man, and to furnish the means of abundance, at the time when he was to inhabit the globe. This is not a mere occasional concurrence of forces, which might happen once in eternity by some fortunate accident: it is a steady association of many *systems of causes*, geological, meteorological, vegetative, and others, which might be in action distinct from one another.

The field becomes yet larger when account is taken of man himself as a living and intelligent being. Many writers have dwelt at length on the wonders of his constitution in mind and body; and have successfully indicated the innumerable designs and adaptations which fit him for the world in which he dwells, and secure the permanence of the race. The yet deeper accommodation of the living soul to the material world has already been noticed at length. To say nothing of the astonishing design which is manifested in the *organs* of sense, the eye, the ear; there is some original relation between mind and matter, resting on their hidden properties or powers, in virtue of which the mind is sensitive to physical impressions. The eye discovers something of matter, the touch something different, the other senses something more. The ear would have been useless in a medium of light without one of sound; the eye in a medium of sound without light. It is a happy accident that the organs we have are so admirably fitted to communicate between the mind and the world; that the eye has light, and the ear sound, and the mind is so sensitive to both, and has, besides, its native power of combining its sensations in one image? Is it chance which has brought together, out of endless varieties in the forms and natures of possible things, exactly those primitive forces which are in suitable relation to one another, and has formed the substances of mind and matter, and qualified the mind to perceive and discern in the world precisely what man needs to know for the preservation and happiness of life? Or is it not more likely that One Cause is the cause of all things, that One Creator has, for wise ends, placed the human race in a world adapted and furnished for its existence? It is not a mere matter of probability, but a question of strict reason. Deny a First Cause, and the law

of thought and being demands a number of causes, and then demands a cause of their combination and unity.

4. The appeal to chance is futile and unmeaning. A past eternity would not suffice for the trials to be made before the happy subsidence of atoms in this world of ours. The old illustration is a good one. Let the letters of the Iliad be thrown into a bag, and drawn out one by one, over and over again, to all eternity. Reason can not conceive that they will ever to all eternity produce the Iliad. And yet the possible permutations may fall far short of the permutations of all monads which can exist. For it is not a question of the combination of those substances only which *do* exist, but of all the substances which lie within the infinite possibilities of things. In infinite space and time the monads or substances must be considered infinite in *number*. And since there is evident diversity, but nothing is known to limit the possible diversities, it is necessary, in estimating the dogmatic assertion that the world has been formed by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, to take account of an infinite number of *different kinds* of atoms, and these not only such as may combine, but such as have no relations to one another, and admit of no possible combination or arrangement. Besides the question, By what means have the atoms been disposed and arranged? positive atheism is open to the previous question, Whence their capability of arrangement? Is it by a happy chance that the eternal substances have fallen into their admirable order? Is it also by a happy chance that these eternal substances were so related to one another as to make it possible that they should associate at all, much more that they should co-operate to produce this glorious cosmos, this grand, and stable, and universal frame?

There is an inconceivably small possibility that the letters of the Iliad may be drawn from a bag in their proper order. The right letters have been taken, and they admit of many correct arrangements. But the case of atheism is far more hopeless. To pass over the objection, that he can have nothing to limit the number of his letters, and has, therefore, to form not only a large book like the Iliad, but one infinitely great, so that he can never have completed a single attempt at such arrangement; besides

this, he is under the farther difficulty that he does not even know whether he has the right letters, or any that can combine to give meaning and unity to the whole. We come nearer to the case if we choose *at random* as many letters as compose the Iliad, and throw them into a bag. The arithmetical chance of drawing the Iliad is now an infinitesimal of the second order.

But it is not yet zero. No; nor is it parallel to our case. We must take our letters, not from one alphabet, but from all which have been used in any tongue. There still remains a chance, that in choosing at random to eternity we shall at last select all the letters from the *Greek* tongue, and then the required letters from this tongue, and then draw them in their proper order from the bag.

The chance, it may be said, is not yet zero; there is still a small infinitesimal, and eternity is long. But the cases are not even yet parallel. We may go on adding other classes of things, of whatever kind, to the alphabets, till we have exhausted all the existing things of the universe, and shall still fall short, it may be infinitely short, of the number of forms of possible existence. And it is from these forms that the atheist must draw his monads, and select and re-select them again and again, before he can find ground for his pretension that the universe may have originated in chance. In affirming the possibility of its formation by chance, he rashly assumes that he sees the whole of it; and that, having seen all which is, he has seen all which can be. The astronomical vastness, all but infinite to man—the geological permanence, all but eternal—forbid his imposing a limit to the possible forms of eternal being. These also may be infinite.

Thus the dogmatic atheist, in pretending to account for the formation of the world, begins by supposing it all but made, when he assumes the existence and sole existence of its simple substances. Innumerable conditions, all of them, however, acting through one human nature, contributed to the formation of the Greek tongue; and it was not till it was formed that one man, employing that language, could select the words and letters, and combine them with intelligence in a perfect poem. Innumerable conditions were also necessary to the possibility of the existing universe. Sub-

stances were to be chosen, monads were to be determined, and many relations were to be established, before it was possible they could combine. An eternity of trials is insufficient for the problem; an infinity of eternities is insufficient. One account, and one only, can satisfy the causal law and answer the conditions of all possible knowledge. An intelligent Being must have created and combined them. That Being is GOD. He is the One Cause of all diversity, and of all union of the diverse; of all simple forces, and of all their combinations. His nature is incomprehensible. But to man every thing is incomprehensible. This, however, he may know even of incomprehensibles—this it falls within the limits of reason to affirm, that *One Incomprehensible* satisfies the conditions of all knowledge, and gives a sufficient basis of the known; and that many incomprehensibles do not.

SECTION II.

SKEPTICAL OR NEGATIVE ATHEISM.

5. Believes in Science.—6. Its vain Pretensions.—7. Its Deficiencies.—8. Skepticism professes Humility.—9. But not consistently.—10. Becomes dogmatic.—11. Reason looks beyond the relative.

5. Some professed atheists decline all inquiry into the unseen causes and secret nature of existence, maintaining such questions to be useless speculation, for which we possess no faculties and no sources of information. They would limit the field of knowledge to the visible and phenomenal, and would confine us to the observation of appearances and the investigation of laws. Positive science is their philosophy; their religion, the material progress of the race; the illimitable universe is their temple; and Nature the incomprehensible goddess whom they worship.

There is enough, they will say, in the wonders of the visible to employ the faculties, to give food to the imagination, and work to the energies of a being so short-lived as man. The study of nature's book, in its instructive and pictured pages, has been always rewarded with splendid results. The child of this age knows more than the philosopher of ages past. Already have the phenomena

of astronomy been brought within the nicest calculation, and all the motions of space reduced to a single and universal law. Science has advanced in its physical, its chemical, its physiological departments,[1] and has vastly increased the comforts and the conveniences of life. It has alleviated the sufferings of man, and prolonged his existence; it is now extending itself to the more difficult question of social relation. It has done much already to remedy the evils of society, and bids fair to bring them to an issue. Nature, "inexorable to prayers," is often "propitiated by science;" while the search after truth and the progress of knowledge have done more than the speculations of schoolmen, or the dogmas of divines, or the cant of sects, to enlighten the minds of the masses, and to elevate them in the scale of being. Science has increased our material comforts, while it has contributed to our mental development. It is a more attainable and a more wholesome food for the mind than unintelligible abstractions and speculations. Man is formed by education, and there can be no purer oil than that of science to feed the flame of human intellect, and hand it down bright and burning from age to age. Science is to effect what religion has not effected. Religion has been tried for ages, and has found no remedy for the appalling evils of imperfect social states. Science must regenerate society, and achieve the happiness of a golden age.

The total incompetency of this philosophy is shown by all the direct evidences of theism. Succeeding chapters will evince its disloyalty to reason, its inconsistency in assuming for its own foundation principles which it had pretended to ignore, its inability to meet the natural wants, to direct the aspirations, to give a purpose to the capacities of the soul. Some general observations may not be useless in this place.

6. And, first, upon its intolerant pretensions. The question is not between religion and science, but between religion and no religion. Science has effected much, and will effect yet more to meliorate the condition of the human race. But does experience discover the progress of knowledge to be necessarily a progress of virtue? Granted that religion has not regenerated society, but

[1] According to M. Comte's Classification of the Sciences.

have its principles been fairly accepted or applied? Its tendency, at all events, is to increase the sum of happiness; its law of love to God and man has this aim and purpose, and is successful in proportion to its influence. Science has no such law nor tendency. Though its chemistry were as perfect as its mathematics, and its physiology as its astronomy, though the philosophy of history had discovered all the springs of social changes, and had drawn forth all the wisdom of experience which the past can furnish to the present, yet there is nothing in all this to break the force of individual selfishness, nor therefore to bring us nearer to social perfection.

Social improvement is incompatible with the reign of selfishness. Recent history has shown that it is not to be introduced by calculation and brute force. The world has had some experience of hasty changes for which mankind were unprepared; and the result is a sufficient answer to the charge, that religion has not regenerated society. Its failure, even when it is held responsible for the crimes and follies of the irreligious, who shelter themselves under its name and form—its failure, though it be judged thus irrationally, has not been so signal, nor so terrible in results, as that of the philosophers and calculators, when they have had free scope for their *ideas*. It is in proportion as men become less selfish that they will be prosperous in their social changes. The happiness of the many will be advanced when each prefers it to his personal aggrandizement. There will be a happy era for humanity when men shall feel that it is better to work for the good of all than to pamper one's self, or outvie others, or to elevate one's family in the social scale. Skeptical atheism has recently accused Christianity of a tendency to impede progress by making men indifferent to this world. Caution is little needed on such a point! When men appear so far regardless of it as to desire general more than personal advantage, it will be soon enough to put them on their guard against carrying their indifference too far. In the mean time, the Christian may talk less, but he will effect more toward the improvement of society, by following the law of his religion—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," than the positivist with all the laws and sciences of his system. They who know any thing

of Christian life and history have learned the force and tendency of its influences in themselves, and in the many bright examples by which it has adorned the world.

7. Positive philosophy has no place for the questions which are the most interesting and important to the soul, the only questions which can be very momentous in so short a life—"Whence is this Nature, and whence am I? What is the meaning of her hieroglyphics, and what light do they throw upon my destiny? Is death indeed to be my end, and to cut short the desire of immortality? Is this great goddess Nature so niggardly of her infinite treasures as to allow me but the slender patrimony of these few years? Am I but a bubble on the great ocean of being, dashed for a moment in the air and then gone forever; or am I the child of a great, and good, and universal Parent?"

The negative atheist may possess the common nature of mankind, the same powers of perception, reason, will, the affections of man, his sense of right, his sense of the true, the beautiful, the good; but his theory of knowledge rests on a part only of these undeniable facts of human nature. At least the facts of sensation are made unduly predominant. The will is mere mechanism, or a casual flitting from one feeling to another; the affections are capricious internal sensations, which serve for motives to action; it is needless to inquire into their origin or purpose; enough that they incite one to do something, in a life where to be indolent is to be wretched; duty is a law without a magistrate; truth and goodness have no vindicator, and must therefore be secondary to interest, if the selfish feelings be stronger than the moral instincts.

Negative atheism avoids all question of man's origin, his destiny, his relations to God. It sees that nature has some tremendous secret to unfold, but the vail of Neith is still spread over all, and we hear only the riddle of the Sphinx. "Nature," says one,[1] "acts with a fearful uniformity, stern as fate, absolute as tyranny, merciless as death; too vast to praise, too inexplicable to worship, too inexorable to propitiate; its silence is profound, and when we ask its secret it points to death. But nature refers us to science for help, and to humanity for sympathy; love to the lovely is our only

[1] Mr. Holyoake. Discussion with Mr. Townley, p. 69.

homage, study our only praise, quiet submission to the inevitable our duty, and work is our only worship." They look to science for help; and it adds a year or two to the average length of life, and accelerates their powers of locomotion: to humanity for sympathy; but it is to companions in suffering, who need consolation like themselves. Love to the lovely is their homage; and, if their knowledge rest in sensation, we will still believe their feelings to be a higher part of their nature, though unhallowed by the anticipation of immortal fellowship. Study is their praise; but it excites only an adoration of barren wonder and mute astonishment. Others also can submit to the inevitable, though they believe not in inevitable evil. Others have said, "Work is our worship," "*Laborare est orare*," though they have not thought that work is to every one but the fruitless bustle of a few short years, which must prove to have been labor in vain.

And is there no unavoidable feeling in the breast of man, that the material universe, with its wonders of order and beauty, with its all but infinite and eternal existence, is yet inferior to his own soul? Is it a mere egotistical illusion, that a creature of yesterday can cast his gaze toward the immensity, and feel—"Though newly sprung to life, I am more fearfully and wonderfully made than this great universe of worlds: more wonderfully, for I can observe it and calculate its movements, but it sees not me; it has no knowledge nor understanding: more fearfully, for its order is fixed and stable, and it has no power to depart from it; in myself there is an awful choice to be made between order and disorder, and I am not bound in the necessity of nature."

8. Negative atheism makes professions of humility. "The language invented by Pope," it exclaims, "that we may look through nature up to nature's God, has no signification for me, as I know nothing besides nature, and can conceive of nothing greater. The majesty of the universe so transcends my faculties of penetration, that I pause in awe and silence before it."[1] "We stand in the great presence of nature, whose inspiration should be that of modesty, humility, and love."[2]

That the grandeur and magnificence of nature must impress the

[1] Mr. Holyoake. Discussion with Mr. Townley, p. 8. [2] Ibid. p. 41.

thoughtful observer with a sense of littleness, and a feeling of humility, the theist will readily allow. But what is humility? Is it a skeptical doubt upon every question not immediately cognizable by the senses; or a disposition to believe what nature teaches, to be consistent in the application of those mental principles on which all knowledge depends, and to apply them to the interpretation of all the facts of consciousness? To ask no questions, though nature prompts them; to repress the instinctive curiosity, to silence the universal convictions of the soul, and pronounce them delusions—is this the submissive modesty that becomes us? A child is naturally humble, and shows its humility in its disposition to be taught. Humility is not less open to the instruction which lies before it in the book of nature, than unwilling to dogmatize on the pages which are sealed. In the presence of nature, and those powers of nature which are of God, man is ever a child. It becomes him, then, to be humble, and to be consistently so; to be humble, both in his examination of facts, and in pronouncing his judgment upon them.

9. The atheist is inconsistent with his profession of humility, when, without strong support in facts, he confidently ascribes the universal belief in gods, or in the One God, to a delusion. It is always easy to make assertions, and this is one: "In the distorted reflection of man's image on the wall, as it were, of the universe, arose the idea of gods."[1] Such an assertion, without proof, and without any search for its foundation in that which is not the least mysterious of nature's works—the soul of man, with its original faculties and knowledges—such an assertion, hazarded as an explanation of a fact so notorious and universal as the belief in God, is scarcely consistent with professions of humility.

There can be no better reason for pronouncing this universal conviction to be a delusion than might be alleged to discredit the universal knowledge of an external world. It is, at least, as conceivable and as probable that all we see is a delusion; that nothing exists but one's self, and all the rest are but the figures of a vision, as that those very principles of the understanding, which are called into action before we can be aware of the existence of the world

[1] Mr. Holyoake.

without us, are deceived in ascribing that existence to the power of a First and Living Cause.

10. A similar observation applies to the same reasoner's theory of the eternity of matter. "There must always," he says, "have been something, or there could be nothing now. This the dullest feel. Hence we arrive at the idea of the eternity of matter."[1] In one respect this argument is satisfactory. It is gratifying to find that *something* which even the dullest feel is allowed to be true. They feel that out of nothing nothing can arise; that every thing phenomenal must have its cause. But is this assumption of the eternity of matter one to still their unavoidable feeling? Has it existed eternally in all its diversities? Is it a genus of eternal beings? Then the very principle of reason which has just been acknowledged, demands a cause of the relations and combinations of its various kinds. These can no more originate in nothing than the matter itself. Or does it exist without its properties, and are these generable and corruptible? Then—to pass over the question, what do we know of matter without its properties?—again, the same principle demands a Cause of these properties themselves, as well as of their mutual relations; and especially a Cause of the origin of mind in matter. It is as irrational, we have already observed, to derive mind from matter, since the two are wholly incommensurable in all knowledge, or to suppose mind to originate in matter without a cause, as matter itself in nonentity.

And yet the only alleged foundations of this materialism are the incomprehensibleness of the Creator, the incomprehensibleness of the act of creation, and the old questions, "Where was the Creator before any thing existed?" "Was there a time when the God over all was God over nothing?" These, at least, are questions which humility ought to have repressed. Reason might have suggested that, though time is the inseparable condition of all things knowable by man, we may be quite incompetent to pronounce upon its relations to the Supreme Being. Consistency should forbid it to be an objection to theism, that the existence of Him we see not, can not be cleared of the very mysteries which must be confessed to lie in the nature that we see.

[1] Mr. Holyoake, p. 8 and 40.

That His nature must be unknown as well as known, is no more than might be expected; for even visible nature is unknown as well as known. We know her phenomenal garb, not the secret essence of her being. We require a cause or causes of what we see; and all causes are unknown in themselves, whether they rest in nature, or depend upon One above nature. And yet in another sense they are not unknown, for they become known, even the most ordinary things of the material world, in no other way than as oxygen or electricity, by their effects.

This partial knowledge of nature, then, may bear us to a partial knowledge of One above nature, whom, though we see Him not as He is, we may still know by His works. We can not search the mysteries of material being, nor comprehend the manner of its existence. Reason assures us that it exists, and perceives it by its effects on the sensibility. It may also assure us of a Creator, and find indications of His character in the world and in the soul, though His deep nature likewise be unsearchable.

Thus the position of the negative atheist is untenable. He can not but believe in something, and, choosing eternal matter, shelters himself under a theory of positive atheism. He thus at once discards his humility, and exposes himself to all the difficulties of those systems.

Nor does he succeed better in arguing from the incomprehensibleness of creation. Till he knows how the material world *exists*, he can have little right to ask how it was created. He is satisfied that it *does* exist, and he may have the same certainty that its existence had a commencement. When he shall have learned to comprehend the manner of its existence, it is most probable that he will, at the same time, have learned how it began to exist. Meanwhile, reason may assure him of the one fact as well as of the other.

Whether we receive a theory of creation, or one of eternal matter, with its evolution of successive conditions—in either case we rest on what is incomprehensible, and presently pass from the known to the unknown. Reason compels us to choose between creation and an eternal universe of ever-changing matter; between a First Cause transcendent to knowledge, and the extension to in-

finity of those subordinate causes which are before our eyes. But the eternity of matter, and the infinite chain, or the infinity of infinite chains of finite causes, fail to satisfy the conditions of the problem. Such indefinite *extension* of finite causes is conceivable. The notion is only too intelligible, since the extension to infinity can be seen to be irrational and impossible. We are thus compelled to acknowledge One First Cause of all, transcending the visible and the knowable.

11. Thus Reason herself, unless distorted by prejudice or misled by partial views, directs us to the most humble judgment on the deep question of Being. In interpreting the delivery of the senses, when I look upward to the starry deep of space, or before me to the profundity of existence, it discovers that this universe of power and majesty, this "stupendous and mighty frame of nature," is but the outward appearance of a reality, discovered to me by means of the minute image, which fills but the fraction of an inch within my eye. But what is it to beings with other senses? What is it in itself? or, if nothing in itself, what in its dependence upon its cause? Reason can see its own incapacity. It shrinks from the assertion that what *we see* is the totality of what *is*. It will not ascribe infinity to that which, though in appearance illimitable, is an appearance through a minute organ of sense; nor eternity to that which carries in itself the archives of ages beyond number, but exhibits them through an organism of yesterday. It can not ascribe eternity to matter, as matter is known to man; nor all reality to matter, as matter is perceived by man; nor all efficiency to those finite causes, which are felt only in their action upon man; and beneath things as they are known to man, it finds no rest for thought, but in a Being who can not be comprehended under the conditions of thought; no basis of real existence, but in One superior to what is seen or known, One who "fills all, changes never, and passes not away."[1]

Negative atheism finds its complete answer in all the evidences of theism. Enough has been said, however, to show that man is something more than matter, and may have confidence in One higher than himself. All reflection on thought and feeling cor-

[1] Massillon.

roborates this first feeling of humanity, this first dictate of common sense. If we have stood with the mourners by the open grave, and have seen before us the mound of earth, and the coffined dead, and the Christian minister to remind us of life and immortality; and in that moment have asked ourselves the question—Dead material earth is all that remains to us of a friend long known and loved; was he always but a mass of earth? Are the living but clay like the dead? Do they differ only in organization, or in internal movements of some mundane fluid like electricity? Are their falling tears but fated movements of watery drops; and their sorrows, their prayers, their hopes but eternally necessary vibrations of subtile particles of matter? If such a thought have occurred to us, we have shrunk from it with instinctive repugnance, as preposterous both to reason and to feeling, or we are destitute of those instincts, truthful or delusive, which are common to humanity.

The investigation of the principles of all knowledge, attention to the teachings of nature in the soul and in the world, discovers these instincts to be as truthful, and their conviction as certain, as any knowledge that man can possess.

CHAPTER VI.

PANTHEISM.

1. Pantheism and Atheism.—2. Systems of Pantheism.

1. MANY different theories of existence and systems of unbelief must be classed under the name of pantheism. They are generally more attractive to speculative minds, and more self-consistent than systems of materialism.

In pantheistic systems nature is regarded either as itself the Supreme Being, or as a constituent part, or the outward manifestation of His Essence. All the systems agree in the doctrine of eternal universal fatalism.

Material atheism admits the manifest existence of the world, and denies that of its Divine Author. Pantheism assumes the truth of one necessary and eternal Being, but either identifies Him

with the world, regarding the progressive development of material existence as the evolution of the whole Divine Nature, and its adequate representation; or it makes the world to be but one of many finite and necessary evolutions of Infinite Being, but still an essential and inseparable part of it.

The difference between atheism and pantheism may sometimes be a mere matter of words. Both admit the unavoidable truth that something has existed from eternity; both affirm the universe to be eternal. It is often, therefore, a mere verbal question between them, whether or no to call it by the Sacred Name. It is sometimes said that pantheism attributes unity of intelligence and consciousness to eternal nature. But this is not the case in all systems of pantheism; not even in Spinoza's, which makes the infinite intelligence to be the totality of all finite minds.

2. *Pantheism Proper* identifies nature with Deity. It makes the double assertion that all things are God, and that God is all things. The Infinite Being is only the totality of all finite being.

Other pantheistic or semi-pantheistic systems affirm that all things are God, thus deifying the universe with all its parts and manifestations; but do not affirm the Supreme Being to be no more than the sum of all things which are known, or can be known to man. They may acknowledge the visible and the comprehensible to be but one of infinite manifestations, of a Being whose whole nature is unsearchable.

Of pantheism proper there are two classes of systems, which must be viewed as distinct. They may be called *physical* and *intellectual pantheism*,[1] or possibly objective and subjective pantheism.

SECTION I.

PHYSICAL PANTHEISM.

3. Soul of the World.—4. Modern Spiritualism.—5. Odyle.—6. Remarks on this Pantheism.

3. In these systems the world is God. The Divine Being pos-

[1] I am not aware whether these terms have been employed, but they appear to be very necessary.

sesses real, objective existence with unity of consciousness and intelligence. The world, then, is regarded as a living and thinking being; not like a huge and growing plant, but like an animal with a rational and sensitive soul! It is the old doctrine of the Stoics which has been already mentioned. The hylozoic atheism comes nearer to pantheism than the common material systems. It regards all matter as possessing latent powers of life, but as attaining to self-consciousness and intelligence only under particular circumstances. There is, therefore, no unity of mind or thought. Intellectual pantheism also denies unity of intelligence to its self-existent being. But it maintains a unity of being in the essence or substance which lies beneath the world of appearance; a unity of the noumenon of all phenomena. It may differ, therefore, from hylozoic atheism only in its conceptions, not in any objective meaning of them. But in physical pantheism the energies of life and intelligence are supposed to meet in the unity of a world-spirit, whether in the "fiery matter" of the sphere, as in the ancient systems, or in the electricity or other mundane fluid.

The Stoical pantheism has had great influence, and has been prevalent in the philosophy of almost all nations, especially in ancient times. The same, or a similar system, has been revived in the present day, and seems not unlikely to be the last resource of atheism.

4. Its revival is due to the American and other "spiritualists," and is founded on the facts and impostures (for there are both) connected with mesmerism, "table-moving," and the "spiritual manifestations." It is not necessary to give any opinion upon these subjects. Suffice it that numbers of people have been so far satisfied respecting them as to make no question of the facts, and have gone on to discuss how they are to be accounted for.[1]

The pretensions of spiritualism appear to find some support in the popular notions of all ages, whether true or superstitious. They appeal to the language of Scripture respecting witchcraft and demoniacal possession, and also to the opinions of the early Christians upon spiritual agency, and to their common practice, and

[1] Thus, in Beecher's "Review of the Spiritual Manifestations," this is the only point of inquiry.

even accustomed rites, of exorcism. The extant writings of the early centuries show that the Christians were wont to ascribe the heathen oracles not to imposture, but to agency of evil demons. Notions of this kind, like many common fancies, and family traditions, and popular tales, which may be associated with them, have in later times been looked upon as superstitions.

But some Christians have been of opinion that the agency of spirits was permitted in former times, and especially at the epoch of Redemption, to an extent which has since been prohibited by the Divine Will. It has even been conjectured that similar manifestations, and perhaps a reign of atheism or antichrist, instigated and led by evil spirits, will precede the second advent of the Messiah.

In connection with these subjects of mesmerism and the rest, the question has been discussed, How are the facts to be accounted for? Widely different theories have been started, and among them one very analogous to the old doctrine of the soul of the world, which is sometimes thought to have been suggested to the ancients by a deep knowledge of man's relations to nature.[1]

5. The modern theory founds itself upon Reichenbach's recent discovery (as some believe it, though it is much questioned) that there is an imponderable agent distinct from electricity, and manifesting itself under different conditions, which pervades not only the bodies of all creatures, but the earth and all space. This agent, whether it exist or not, has received the name of odyle. It is conjectured to be the agent in animal magnetism and kindred phenomena.

This discovery, it seems, is to supply the deficiencies of materialism. It makes the world to be a living being, and renders it unnecessary to look farther for a First Cause. The animated world itself is the great cause of causes. Its diffused spirit is the source

[1] A passage in Mad. de Staël's Germany is curious at present (1853). "The German men of science," she says, "appear to admit, from their manner of exhibiting some phenomena of animal magnetism, that the will of man, without any external act, exerts a very great influence over matter, and especially over metals." "There were perhaps of old more intimate relations between man and nature than now exist." Certain ancient religious systems are also mentioned as "vestiges of some curious attraction which united man with the universe."

of all spiritual existence. As the bodies of men are formed of the dust to return to dust again, so their souls are derived from the great odylic ocean which pervades all things and permeates every part of space. They appear for a time to exist as individually distinct, but are really no more distinct than water in different vials moving about in the same ocean.[1] When the bottles break the water is reunited to the ocean, and in like manner the soul at death, or, according to some old systems, after various transmigrations, loses its apparent individuality, and is resumed into the great soul of the world.

6. On this theory a few observations are necessary. If it maintain the eternal and independent existence of universal matter and its universal soul, it is open to most of the obvious difficulties of materialism. If it seek to avoid them by regarding the odylic soul as the single first cause and principle of all things, from which the matter of the world derives both its existence and its properties, and the world itself its adaptations and harmonies of arrangement, the system may then become rather a spurious theism than an atheism. It may be chargeable with a degrading conception of the Deity rather than the denial of His Being, and possibly differs from true theism only in assumptions for which it has no foundation.

Undoubtedly there is a true doctrine of an omnipresent Divine influence in the universe, and it is not inconsistent with theism or with Scripture that the continued existence of all things depends on the perpetual going forth of energy from the Almighty. The Christian theist believes that He is present in all His works, and may hold their existence to be the continued effect of His immanent presence and operation. It was held, in fact, by almost all the early Christian writers, that a certain sustaining and vivifying spirit had been infused into the material world by its Creator, and was thought by many, and, according to a very learned and accurate interpreter of their writings,[2] by most of

[1] This illustration is from Indian pantheists, and is quoted by Bayle from Bernier. See also Leibnitz, Theod. Discours de la conformité, etc., § 8. He says, "Plusieurs alloient à croire que Dieu est cette âme universelle, quoique d'autres aient cru qu'elle étoit subordonnée et créée." He finds the doctrine in Virgil, Æn. vi. 724. Georg. iv. 221.

[2] *Mosheim on Cudworth*, vol. ii. p. 345, note.

them, and by those of the highest authority, "that the same Spirit which animates and inspires the minds of holy men controls and sustains the universe." The Holy Spirit is, on this doctrine, the vivifying Spirit of nature. It would hardly have been admitted by any of these writers that a subtile fluid, electricity, or odyle, which can be made perceptible to the senses and obedient to the will of an experimenter, belongs to the Divine essence, or is any thing more than a subordinate agent.[1] But the connection between the Divine agency and the Divine nature is a difficult and inexplicable question. It will be shown hereafter that the notion of an extended Divine essence is irrational and inadmissible, but it is not necessarily atheistic.

The full answer to this doctrine is to be found in the various evidences which may be adduced for the being and attributes of God. Whatever be His essence or manner of existence, He is the adequate self-sufficient Cause of all things; the Author not only of a universe of mechanical and chemical forces, but of rational agents who may direct themselves according to motives which rest in thought. From his own nature and constitution man gains a knowledge, though infinitely inadequate, of the Giver of life. His intelligence directs him to an intelligent First Cause; his moral nature indicates a moral Governor; his affections assure him of a loving Father in the living God.

A self-existent nature of mechanical causes, whether residing in gross matter or in subtile fluids, would have made man a mechanical automaton. If this pantheistic system admit the soul of the world to be intelligent, the question arises, Is this intelligence a power of creating the motives of action and of forming designs; or is it but a self-conscious activity, which may be as much a mechanical cause as if it were devoid of consciousness? Whatever evidences natural theology may possess, that the Creator is not a mere self-conscious energy, but One who acts with Design, whose motives are Eternal Wisdom and Goodness, the same evidences apply to a creative soul of the world.

[1] Tatian, I find, has distinctly, Πνεῦμα ὁ Θεὸς οὐ δίηκου διὰ τῆς ὕλης, πνευμάτων δὲ ὑλικῶν, καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ σχημάτων κατασκευαστής. (Orat. 12.) The doctrine is stated to the same effect by Clemens (Strom. v. xiii. p. 590); and by Origen (c. Cels. vi. 71) in reply to Celsus, who charged the Christians with the Stoical doctrine.

This pantheistic system, in common with all others, maintains an eternal fatalism; but it may thus be compelled to allow that wisdom is the necessary law of this fatalism, and goodness its eternal motive. It may thus be forced to the admission that the Supreme Creator possesses the attributes of a living and a loving Father. A living Cause who acts with Intelligence, even though His action be conceived necessary, is not One who will endow creatures with feelings and aspirations capable of rising to Himself, and seeming to find in Him their happiest and most ennobling service, unless He be Himself such as to be the object of these feelings, and to give to these aspirations their satisfaction.

Again: while this system can give no proof of its assumption that the Creator is inseparable from nature, we shall find evidences of the opposite truth that he exists superior to nature, and above all human knowledge. To affirm that He is not distinct from nature can be, at the best, but an ungrounded assumption. Nature is full of His presence, and goodness, and operation; but, though present in it, He is superior to it. We can find no vestige of evidence that He is confined to it, either locally, or in any intelligible notion of substantial being.

But it is impossible to have too deep a conviction of His presence in the world. Whatever unity may belong to the ultimate ground of all being; whatever the deep nature of the self-existent Creator, or his relations to the creatures; whatever the reality of those eternal attributes which manifest themselves in love and holiness to mankind, it deeply concerns us to find in ourselves and in the world the assurances that the Author of our being deals with us as a Friend and Father; to know that in our sphere of individual life, the sphere of human thought and feeling, we can find indications that this form of being will be continued beyond the present life. We have reason to acknowledge that, however far He may be exalted above the nature which our dim eyes can discern, and our finite minds imagine, yet, in the words of revelation, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being," and "He is not far from every one of us."

SECTION II.

INTELLECTUAL PANTHEISM.

7. Account of it.—8. Spinoza's Pantheism.—9. Examination of Spinoza's System.—Assumed Impossibility of Creation.—Only one Substance.—10. Spinoza's Fatalism.—11. Is Spinozism Atheistic?—12. Ethics of the System.—13. Its false Pretenses.

7. The world of appearance is presented to us as a world of diversities and even inconsistencies; but, according to these systems of pantheism, it is One substance or essence in itself, that is, beneath all that appears to man, and is the very substance or essence of the Infinite Being. The Supreme Being is thus the noumenon, the world we see the phenomenon. He is the *natura naturans*, of which the *natura naturata* is before our eyes; and visible nature is the evolution of His Infinite Being, under the two forms of mind and matter, or thought and extension. Mind and matter are therefore regarded as only phenomenally distinct. In their deep nature they are one and inseparable from one another.

It is evident that the reality or substratum of either mind or matter, without reference to its phenomena, is a bare intellectual conception, divested of all attributes by which it can be said to be known. In themselves unknown except as causes, they are regarded by human faculties, and *must* be regarded, as mediately known, and measured by their phenomena. But the Substance, or Original Being, or God of intellectual pantheism, is either the empty conception itself, or, if we attempt to give it meaning, we must view it under the common properties of mind and matter. Its Supreme Being is thus either a bare notion, or the sum or totality of all finite things. Intelligence, for instance, belongs to the phenomenal world; *the real*, therefore, that is, God, can not in this system be said to be intelligent, but only to attain intelligence in finite beings.

It will generally be found, on close examination, that intellectual pantheism is undistinguishable from atheism except by certain grandiloquent expressions, which closely resemble the language of theism, and are apt to deceive the unwary, but are words and conceptions without meaning or object.

8. It will not be irrelevant to our subject, and will aid us in understanding the principles of pantheism, and their relations to theism, to pay some attention to the celebrated system of Spinoza. This may be thought, perhaps, a needless task,[1] but recent experience has shown that he holds, in all the recurring phases of pantheism, a place as prominent as Hume in skepticism. He is the Coryphæus of pantheists. His name and system are continually brought to the surface in the meanders of speculation. Not but that his theory is substantially the same as many which preceded it both in ancient times and in the Middle Ages; but in modern literature it dates its origin from him, and finds in his writings its most logical deduction and most consistent development.

Pantheism has been very conspicuous among the philosophic systems of Germany, and has of late years not been without influence in our own country. There are many signs of a revival of the speculative spirit which has been long dormant, and pantheism is already one of its results. Among Christians it is sometimes spoken of as "the only consistent system of unbelief,"[2] and there are not a few who, with Lessing, look on it "as the only possible philosophy,"[3] and the natural and certain result of speculative inquiries. Hence timid writers, distrusting the faculties which God has given, and which distinguish man from the brutes, will sometimes warn us to turn from such investigations without seeking to ascertain the limits of certainty, lest we see God and man, mind and matter, swallowed up in pantheistic nihilism.

To discover the weakness of Spinozism in its foundations should be no difficult undertaking. But it has sometimes been attempted with little success. Dr. Clarke's examination of it has been already mentioned. Bayle's article can hardly pretend to be confutation, although he has just remarks and deduces consequences from the system which can not fail to make it odious to its enemies. Its advocates are not to be met except on their own ground.

9. This famous system, developed in the "Ethics" of Spinoza,

[1] Spinoza's demonstrations are pronounced by Leibnitz, "pitoyables ou non-intelligibles." Op. p. 179.

[2] I have read these words, I think in Dr. Pusey.

[3] "Es giebt keine andere Philosophie als die Philosophie des Spinoza." Quoted in the preface to Bruder's Spinoza.

rests entirely on the principle of Des Cartes, that whatever notion of the mind is clear and distinct, is an adequate expression of objective truth. So far does Spinoza carry this power of the mind, that he sometimes asserts, and in one of his propositions pretends to demonstrate, that the human mind has an adequate cognition of the eternal and infinite essence of God.[1]

To estimate the worth of the system, we must pay attention to its foundation in its definitions. These are all founded on the assumption that the human mind is a living mirror, which can read, imaged in itself, the pictured realities of being, and that the definitions and logical processes of pure intellect are adequate expressions of these realities.

Thus the first definition[2] represents "a cause of itself," or a self-existent cause, to be "that, the essence of which involves existence, or that, the nature of which can not be conceived as non-existent." And the third[3] defines substance to be "that which exists in itself and is conceived by itself, or that, the conception of which is independent of any thing else."

This third definition, in connection with one of the axioms, gives us at once by assumptions a leading doctrine of the system. The axiom[4] states that "the cognition of an effect depends upon that of the cause and involves it." No effect can be known by itself, and therefore since what is known by itself is identical with what exists in itself (Def. III.), no effect can exist in itself; or, in other words, no created thing can possess independent being. No creature, in short, can be separate from the Creator; but that which possesses present existence of its own must be eternally self-existent.

There is here, then, a concealed assumption of what only needs

[1] Ethics, Pars ii. Prop. xlvii. "Mens humana adæquatam habet cognitionem æternæ et infinitæ essentiæ Dei." See "De Intell. Emend." § 91, etc.

[2] Def. I. "Per *causam sui* intelligo id, cujus essentia involvit existentiam, sive id, cujus natura non potest concipi nisi existens."

[3] Def. III. "Per *substantiam* intelligo id quod in se est et per se concipitur; hoc est id, cujus conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei, a quo formari debeat."

[4] Axiom iv. "Effectus cognitio a cognitione causæ dependet et eandem *involvit.*"

to be distinctly stated, and it is at once seen to be beyond possible knowledge.[1] He assumes, and then pretends to prove, what it must be impossible for man to know.

If we inquire into the source of error, it may be observed at once that both the definitions are double. An author is at liberty, provided he preserve consistently the meaning of his terms, to define them as he may think proper. At least a consistent misuse of words does not prove a system to be false. But he is not at liberty to give two definitions of the same thing, without showing them to be identical. A self-existent cause may be defined to be that whose essence involves existence, or that which can not be conceived as non-existent. But it can not be defined in both ways, unless they are known to be identical. The one has reference to being, the other to the mind's conceptions; but we have no proof (and can have none) that that which the mind conceives as self-existent is exactly that which does of itself exist.

Similar observations apply to Def. III. It was perfectly allowable in this and in Def. V.[2] to divide all objective existence into the two mental classes of substances and modes, or independent and dependent entities; but we can not know that any division of conceptions will correspond to the reality of things.

But supposing it to have been established by these definitions that substance can not be created, it is still possible that there may be many self-existent substances. The next step is to reduce them to one, and this is accomplished (Props. IV. and V.) by a similar confusion between conceptions and things, which is here a confusion between things distinct in themselves and things distinguished by the mind. But we need not enter upon the wretched logomachy which so readily perplexes the question of identity and diversity, especially in connection with a system which pretends to measure universal being by human conceptions.

[1] No objection can be founded on the fact that in Def. III. we have "conceptus substantiæ," and in Ax. iv. "cognitio;" for Spinoza himself, in Prop. vi., substitutes "cognitio" for "conceptus" in referring to the axiom. In fact, this confusion of conceptions with knowledge is the fundamental principle of the system, and its fundamental error.

[2] "Per *modum* intelligo substantiæ affectiones, sive id quod in alio est, per quod etiam concipitur."

Having professed to show that but one substance can exist, and that it must be infinite (Prop. VIII.), he goes on, in Prop. XI., to give demonstrations of the being of God. These also are founded on conceptions, and are similar to Des Cartes', which will be noticed in a succeeding chapter.

It appears, then, that these definitions and propositions are a mere show of demonstration. They may effect certain distinctions and classifications of ideas, but can add nothing to our knowledge of being. Spinoza almost admits as much (Prop. VIII. Schol. II.) when he says that the conclusions of his preceding propositions amount to nothing more than men would easily receive as axiomatic, did they only allow themselves to reflect. Beyond question reason is naturally disposed to believe in one real Being, self-existent and infinite. But it can not show, much less assume as self-evident, that no created being can possess in himself any attribute or power, communicated once for all in the act of creation. On the contrary, it is not difficult to see that such an assertion can rest on nothing less than a knowledge of the whole mystery of existence. A man can not know beforehand what will be the action of a machine when it shall be set agoing, unless he be acquainted with its construction and properties; much less can he know what will be the agency of the First Cause, unless he have complete insight into His Nature. He sees material creation as it is, a great machine in action; he sees its intelligent beings possessed, so far as he can apprehend, of a power to originate their actions, but to know how this power is possessed, or how communicated, he must himself be equal with the Creator.

10. A few words on the fatalism of the system. This again is founded on a definition. He says (Def. VII.): "That thing shall be called free which exists by the sole necessity of its nature, and is determined to action by itself alone; but necessary or rather constrained, when it is determined by something else to exist and act in a certain and determinate way."[1]

[1] "Ea res *libera* dicetur, quæ ex sola suæ naturæ necessitate existit, et a se sola ad agendum determinatur; *necessaria* autem vel potius *coacta*, quæ ab alio determinatur ad existendum et operandum certa ac determinata ratione."

We have here another double definition, which begs the whole question of fatalism. It assumes that nothing is determined to action by an originating power of its own, now residing in itself, unless it exist necessarily and eternally. But we have seen that we can not know an independent being to be necessarily self-existent. A created being may therefore be independent both in present existence and in action.

And more than this; it is possible, as far as man can know, and Spinoza has nothing better than assumption to the contrary, that a being always dependent in existence may possess an independent power of action. An objection, indeed, has been expressed as follows by another writer:

"It is not conceivable how an independent attribute should exist in a dependent subject. Can the attribute be infinite when the subject of its inhesion, as well as the other attributes inhering with it, are finite? This would make the attribute rise in excellence above its subject, just the same absurdity as to suppose the effect may be more perfect than its cause."[1]

To omit irrelevant observations on minor points which are here open to remark, it seems a sufficient reply on the point before us, that we can form no conception of the subject distinct from its attributes, nor of independent or dependent existence except as power original or derived. In so far, then, as the powers are independent, the being or subject, who is known as the combination of these powers, is independent. It is therefore conceivable, and may be possible, as far as can be known, that the same being may be partly independent, partly dependent. It is perhaps not improbable that man is a mysterious combination of ever-deriving life and once imparted energy. It is conceivable that his originating power, though given him once for all, may be continued under conditions which are maintained through a derivation of other powers of life, just as the law may secure a man in the absolute possession of his estate, although he is dependent upon health and life for its enjoyment.

11. There is nothing more remarkable in the history of opinion

[1] "Inquiry into the Origin of Human Affections," published in 1747. In Parr's Tracts, p. 133.

than the opposite language which has been held upon the character and tendency of Spinoza's pantheism. Though generally considered atheistic and impious,[1] it is sometimes spoken of as a sublime system of truth, which has been sadly misunderstood by weakness and prejudice; and its author as not only a virtuous, but a "God-intoxicated man," one who "in holy innocence and deep humility gazed upon the eternal world, and was full of religion and the Holy Spirit."[2]

Such is a common opinion of the system in Germany, and it has of late years been introduced with similar eulogies to the British public.[3] On this account, and from its influence in modern philosophy, it deserves a short attention to see whether it be the disguised atheism it has been represented or no.

The system is founded on high intellectual notions of the absolute and self-existent Being. Such conceptions are natural to the cultivated intelligence, and direct it to a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. But the God of Spinoza will be found to be the God of atheism, decked out with sublime conceptions which belong to the living God, but are here hollow and unmeaning.

Its one Being or substance is represented as the immanent cause of all things, and the purport of this doctrine may appear far from atheistic, especially when it is confirmed by reference to the sacred Scriptures. But suspicion is excited when God is declared to be the *natura naturans*, of which all other things are the *natura naturata*. It looks as if God and nature are really identical, and only distinguished with reference to our modes of conception. He is known by reason as a substance underlying the world, of which nature is the adequate representation. The meaning becomes still more evident when we find the two classes of facts, those of mind and matter, declared to be modifications of Divine attributes, *thought* and *extension*;[4] and that the mind of man is a part of the Infinite intellect of God.[5]

[1] "Cet impie de nos jours, qui faisait son Dieu de l'univers, n'en avait point. C'était un véritable athée." Malebranche, Entretiens, viii. 9.

[2] Eulogies by Novalis and Schleiermacher, often quoted.

[3] See e. g. Oxford and Cambridge Review, Oct. 1847.

[4] Eth. ii. 1 and 2; and i. 15, Schol. "Conclusimus substantiam extensam unum ex infinitis Dei attributis esse."

[5] Eth. ii. 11 Corol.

It is still possible, however, that all this may be, not complete atheism, but an exaggerated doctrine of the abiding connection between God and the world. Even Dr. Clarke goes along with Spinoza in affirming that infinity and eternity, or infinite extension and thought, are modes or attributes of God. The question is, whether the universe is a total evolution of the fullness of Infinite Being; or there is a Divine essence surpassing the power which dwells in nature, though including it as an essential part of itself.

We begin to hope it may be so; for extension and thought, though attributes of God, are only two of many,[1] which can not all be known by the mind of man.[2] But, on farther attention, we find that, whatever other attributes there may be, there can still be no other world in which they unfold themselves than this universe of which we are parts; for extension and thought, the two known attributes, are only different conceptions of this one world;[3] and all possible attributes can only be so many more conceptions possible to infinite intellect, but not to man, of this one world.[4] In short, it is in the universe, which is always and essentially one, though it may be viewed under infinite varieties of form by infinite varieties of intellect, that we are to find the essential unity in which all the infinite attributes are combined. The unknown attributes of the so-called self-existent Being in no way exalt his nature to be superior to the universe, but only include other manifestations of nature, or other forms of intuition or thought, which may be conceived as possibly belonging to the universe which we know.

[1] Epist. lx. "Non dico me Deum omnino cognoscere, sed me quædam ejus attributa, non autem omnia neque maximam intelligere partem." This statement, then, must modify Eth. ii. 47, quoted above.

[2] Ep. lxvi. "Concludo mentem humanam nullum Dei attributum præter hæc posse cognitione assequi."

[3] Ethics, iii. 2, Schol. "Mens et corpus una eademque res est, quæ jam sub cogitationis, jam sub extensionis attributo concipitur." See also ii. 21, Schol.

[4] Ethics, ii. 7, Schol. "Sive naturam sub attributo extensionis, sive sub attributo cogitationis, sive *sub alio quocunque*, concipiamus, unum eundemque ordinem, sive unam eandemque causarum connexionem, hoc est, easdem res invicem sequi reperiemus," etc.

This universe then—nature with its intelligent beings, in all its eternal developments and evolutions—nature is God: not indeed, as materialism says, the mere visible and tangible nature of sensation, but that which lies beneath it, which is adequately expressed in it, and is known by the attributes of extension and thought. Spinoza does nothing more in allowing his deity other attributes besides these two, than affirm, what every theist must affirm of the created world, that the mind of man can perceive it only under certain conditions, or in its relation to himself, and can not understand what it may be to other minds, and in other relations.

12. It is not surprising that lofty conceptions and speculations respecting the Divine nature, which are found when analyzed to reduce the Almighty to a nonentity, should carry along with them an ethical system assuming the tone of an elevated morality of theism; but which also, on closer examination, turns out to be equally hollow, at least in its theistic pretensions. This is the case with the works of Spinoza. Numerous passages may be adduced, which, considered alone, would seem to show that we have here a philosophy identifying virtue with wisdom, and directing us to a high standard of goodness. We expect to learn something of the dignity and excellence to which human nature may aspire.

And there are passages too which may warn the fatalist, that notwithstanding the paramount necessity of all things, he is free within his province; and, as a part of nature, possesses a part of nature's powers within himself.[1] He is subject indeed to evil passions and affections which he can not at once eradicate,[2] but he is able to moderate them by his intelligence.[3] He can form a "clear conception" of all passions to which he is subject, and has only to understand the affection which troubles him, to gain some power over it and to direct it.[4]

The conclusions on this subject appear to be equivalent in meaning to those of Bishop Butler and other Christian writers, that the

[1] Tract Theol.-pol. cap. iv. § 3. "Et quamvis absolute concedam, omnia ex legibus universalibus naturæ determinari ad existendum et operandum certa ac determinata ratione; dico tamen has leges ex placito hominum pendere. Quia homo, quatenus pars est naturæ, eatenus partem potentiæ naturæ constituit."

[2] *Eth. lib. iv.* [3] Ib. lib. v. [4] Ib. v. Props. 3 and 4.

doctrine of fatalism is not inconsistent with man's moral responsibility. In fact, it is possible to hold the atheism of Spinoza along with a theory of duty; and to give the theory its practical effect, under the hope of present or eternal happiness following upon right conduct, and the fear of misery upon wrong; not, however, through any Divine Agency or moral Will of the Creator, but in the natural and necessary connections of eternal things. Assuredly the moral laws of creation are manifested in the soul of man, as the physical laws in the world; and the atheist may have regard to those as well as these, though he do not see that law must be the rule of intelligent agency. He is otherwise imprudent as well as irrational.

But we shall be much mistaken, if we think the ethical doctrines of Spinoza to be at all inconsistent with the inherent atheism of his system. He talks indeed, and in lofty terms, of obedience to laws human and divine. But we find, on attention, that these laws are so called, only "in the sense in which philosophers call by the name of laws, the common rules of nature, according to which all things happen."[1] Human laws indeed are prescribed and enforced by authority, and society is the combination of individuals for aiding and constraining one another in subduing passion to reason, for the general benefit. Justice, then, is nothing more than the will of the community.[2] But Divine commands are so called, because they are prescribed as if by God Himself, in so far as his existence is posited by our minds.[3] Divine commands are obligatory as such, and are so considered, only so long as we are ignorant of their cause.[4] So again the love of God is the highest blessedness of man, and the final aim and tendency of all human actions;[5] but this love is nothing more than an intellectual cognition. It is the chief good because man's best part is his intellect, and there can be no right exercise of the intellect,[6] no cognition nor certitude, no freedom from an inconstant and fluc-

[1] Tract. Theol.-pol. cap. xvi. 53, note. "Deum amare, eo sensu legem appellavi, quo philosophi communes naturæ regulas, secundum quas omnia fiunt, leges vocant." [2] Eth. iv. 37, Schol. 2.

[3] Tract. Theol.-pol. iv. 13. "*Jussa Dei* vocari possunt, quia quasi ab ipso Deo, quatenus in nostra mente existit, nobis præscribuntur."

[4] Ib. xvi. 53, note. [5] Ib. iv. 14. [6] Ib. iv. 10.

tuating mind,[1] unless we have a distinct idea of God, without Whom nothing can be, nothing can be conceived.[2] And this cognition of God is, moreover, nothing better than a cognition of nature, which is a cognition not merely of Divine Agency, but of the Divine Essence. "The greater our knowledge of nature," he says, "the more perfect our knowledge of the Divine Essence, which is the Cause of all things." "He therefore is necessarily most perfect, and partakes of the highest happiness, who loves above all things the intellectual cognition of God, the most Perfect Essence, and delights in it the most."[3]

This, then, is certainly a consistent system of unbelief. It is quite consistent with itself, and is consistently developed in the various writings of its author. Grant it the assumed premises, and it deduces all its conclusions with strict and fearless logic. There is no God who can be regarded as Lord of the universe,[4] or Judge of men; none to whom man can desire to be obedient and acceptable;[5] none even in any sense above nature or distinct from it. Good and evil, praise and blame, order and confusion, beauty and deformity, are nothing in themselves, but mere subjective forms of the imagination, and relations of things as they appear to man.[6] Nay, the very intellectual perception of the mind, which is the highest bliss and noblest energy of man, is a part of that Infinite Love, with which the Supreme Being loves Himself.[7]

13. Pantheism is thus an arrogant refusal to believe in a God who "passeth knowledge." M. Saisset speaks of this philosophy as a tendency of the human mind, and gives occasion to an English reviewer[8] to pronounce it "*the* tendency of *the* human mind." So it is, whenever *the* human mind presumptuously assumes that the Infinite and Eternal can be measured by its finite faculties. The

[1] Tract. Theol.-pol. 21. [2] Ib. 10. [3] Ib. 11 and 12.

[4] He is very urgent on this point. "Nemo ea quæ volo percipere recte poterit, nisi magnopere caveat, ne Dei potentiam cum humana regum potentia vel jure confundat." Eth. ii. 3, Schol.

[5] What is meant by "Deo acceptum esse" he can not understand. Epist. xxxvi. [6] Eth. i. App. Ep. xv.

[7] Eth. v. 36. "Mentis amor intellectualis erga Deum, est ipse Dei amor, quo Deus se ipsum amat."

[8] Oxford and Cambridge Review, Oct., 1847.

natural result of such an attempt is, what we have seen in Spinoza, to deify the mind itself, and to engender a self-satisfaction, or a self-contemplation, which is tantamount to self-worship. The world must receive some better evidence than has yet been offered, of the legitimacy of this preposterous assumption, before it will believe that "the current of its thought has been turned and its religious destinies re-directed" by *this* "child of the race of Shem;" or that his system is "what all great philosophies and all great religions have struggled toward from the beginning until now, and been only powerful as they have partaken of its fullness."

Pantheism has no God. It usurps the name for an empty conception; and pretends to give it meaning by the attributes of extension and thought. But the one is extended nonentity, the other a mere abstraction. Goodness, and beauty, and truth have no relations to the Divine Essence, order and harmony are no characters of His operation, love has no residence in His nature. As extended nonentity is nothing, so thought is nothing where intelligence, love, goodness, and every particular mental affection are excluded.

Pantheism leads on the inquirer with high-sounding words, and plausible promises of Divine knowledge. It will discover to him the self-existent Being, not degraded by the conceits of anthropomorphism; it amuses him for a time,

"Prensantem nequicquam umbras;"

it digs deep in the mine of speculation, and brings him to the sepulchre of Rosicrusius. He thinks he has found an ever-burning, an eternal light. He approaches it, and it is suddenly extinguished, and leaves him bewildered in the darkness.

SECTION III.

SEMI-PANTHEISM.

14. Its Doctrine.—15. Divine Fatalism.—Moral Necessity.—16. Is Human Necessity pantheistic?—17. Coexistence of Finite and Infinite.—18. Of transient Causes with the Divine Presence.—19. Of Divine Sovereignty with Freedom and Prayer.—20. Evil inconsistent with Pantheism.

14. Other pantheistic systems may hold a doctrine of the Divine Nature, more or less removed from the impiety of the preceding. The universe in all its parts and manifestations of matter and life, of good and evil, may be regarded as an essential and inseparable part of the Divine Nature, but not the total evolution of Infinite Being. On this hypothesis all things are God, but He is more than the all of nature. His deep Essence may be confessed, as by the theist, to be unsearchable.

Such a pantheism may verge upon a doctrine of emanation, which makes the finite and mutable to be necessary emanations from the Infinite, that pass from it, and return to it, as the mists from the ocean, but leave it unchanged in itself. In like manner, an emanation theory may approximate closely to proper theism.

The error of these pantheisms may consist in a false and ungrounded opinion of the creation and dependence of the universe, and its relations to the Creator, rather than in the complete denial of His being or attributes. Their leading doctrine is that of the necessity of creation, or divine fatalism.

15. This indeed is a characteristic of every pantheism. Its systems may often be undistinguishable from atheism; but they can take no other name, if they admit *chance* to their universe. An atheistic system may maintain an eternal fatalism, but when it does, it differs from pantheism rather in name than in purport, or even conceptions.[1] It is conceivable certainly, that a speculator

[1] Hence the old system of Strato has no right to be called pantheism. He held, says Plutarch—

Τὸ κατὰ φύσιν ἕπεσθαι τῷ κατὰ τύχην· ἀρχὴν γὰρ ἐνδιδόναι τὸ αὐτόματον, εἶτα οὕτω περαίνεσθαι τῶν φυσικῶν παθῶν ἕκαστον.

"That natural causes follow after accidental (the course of nature after the reign of chance), for a spontaneous or automatous motion set the world agoing, and then every physical effect is accomplished as it must be."

who derives the mind of man from a fortuitous concourse of atoms, may go on and assign the same base parentage to an imaginary soul of the world. To be consistent, he must deduce his atoms from nonentity; and then his system will be a fine specimen of dogmatic infidelity, exhibiting nihilism, atheism, and pantheism at one view. But such a theory is not likely to be proposed, because when skepticism thinks it has set aside theism, it is seldom disposed to speculate farther on the figment it has taken in its stead.

Universal fatalism is often regarded as essentially atheistic.[1] And this, no doubt, is true of a physical necessity, and applies therefore to all pantheistic systems which make the universe a physical evolution or manifestation of the Divine Nature. But it is here necessary to bear in mind the distinction between a physical and a moral necessity. Dr. Clarke has well observed upon this point, that "It is consistent with the most perfect liberty to understand that God is unalterably determined by the perfection of His will, to do what is best upon the whole."[2] A doctrine which regards the Divine Agency as necessarily determined by the eternal attributes of Wisdom and Goodness, and in conformity with their eternal moral law, is something very different from an evolution of physical causes. This is not to "give fate a power over Deity."[3] Whether it be choice or necessity, that a good and powerful Being does that which is good, is nothing more than a question of words.[4]

But the Divine Will may be seen to lie beyond the province of reason. The inquiry into the human will is sufficiently diffi-

But the sentence has been variously translated. Strato is thought by Cudworth to have held the hylozoic atheism.

[1] Thus Mosheim calls it "the touchstone of atheism," and says (in Cudworth, vol. i. p. 202, n. 10) that philosophers who determine that God acts necessarily, whatever they may say of His Wisdom and Power are nevertheless atheists. This appears to be pressing the matter too far.

[2] "Being and Attributes," § ix. [3] Mosheim, ubi s.

[4] Leibnitz in his Correspondence with Clarke (Letter v.) is provoked to say, "Peut-être personne n'ait mieux expliqué et plus à fond que j'ai fait dans la Théodicée, la véritable différence, entre liberté, contingence, spontanéité, d'un côté et nécessité absolue, hazard, coaction, de l'autre." The reader will therefore know where to continue the question. No man's testimonial to the Theodicæa could be more valuable than its author's own.

cult, without our seeking to dogmatize on the will of Him who is from everlasting.

16. It is worth consideration, however, whether the doctrine of human necessity do not verge on pantheism, at least when the determining causes of the will, *whether physical or moral*, are derived by necessity from the Divine Sovereignty. To deny all originating power of the will, must be to place the primordial and necessary causes of all things in the Divine Nature. It is in effect to make the will of man a continual, though spiritual, emanation from the will of God, and so to take away the clearest evidence we have of the distinct existence of finite beings. For it is in the acts of the will that we have the most distinct consciousness of personality; and in its deeds of evil, the momentous discovery that we are not one with God. There is surely more reason to regard man as separate from his Maker in his evil agency, than in any other power of his being.

The difference of good and evil is a palpable fact of universal experience; and the first and easiest inference of the mind is what no subsequent inquiry can invalidate; that as the general order and harmony of the universe prove the unity of the Creator, so the interruptions of this harmony, the disorder and confusion, which are the scum on the surface of human life, and can be traced to their source in man's free agency, are indications of some originating power, and a certain distinctness of existence, which belong to finite and subordinate creatures.

Nor does the necessitarian appear to have any escape from a semi-pantheism, in the distinction between physical and moral necessity. It would be more consistent with the facts of life, to speak of chains of immoral necessity. It is true that on this scheme the moral distinction of good and evil may remain the same as before within the sphere of man; and consequently, as extreme necessitarians will admit, exhortations, discipline, chastisements are as necessary as before. But it destroys the distinction in its relation to God, and makes the means of improvement to be but links in the chain of necessity.[1] Of the two direct opposites

[1] Which may as well be supposed, with the old astrologers, to depend upon the stars! Hence Origen, "Non necessitate cogimur, quod fieri ar-

one must be true: either the creature originates evil independently of necessitating cause of whatever kind; or the Creator is the author of both good and evil, and *enmity to God* are words without meaning. All religion, natural or revealed, requires the distinction of right and wrong to be valid beyond the sphere of human thought, and to determine the relation of man to God. Otherwise moral probation is illusory, punishments unjust, and the true ethics are those of Spinoza. For surely it must be one of the darkest features of pantheism, to make the Creator the originator of evil, by deducing all evil as well as good, through a succession, whether of physical causes or of mental motives, from their primordial causes in His nature. From this conclusion, an originating power of the will of created beings is the only possible escape. How far it is an escape, it will be necessary to consider hereafter, in connection with some current theories of evil.

It may be observed, however, that there is nothing repugnant to reason or religion in a pantheism of goodness (if the expression may be allowed). Indeed, it is the doctrine of Holy Scripture, that the deeds of men are acceptable to God, only when their motives originate in a Divine Influence; and that God "all in all" will be the consummation of goodness. This Christian doctrine binds the good man to his Creator in the depths of his being, and leaves to the creature only the negative power of declining the waters of life, and so separating himself from the Fountain of all being.[1]

17. The student of pantheism may perhaps have observed that this philosophy is an attempt to evade the difficulty, constantly recurring in speculative inquiries, of the coexistence of finite and infinite. The mystery of change in the dominion of One who is unchangeable, must always present itself as a perplexing question to the mind.

We have an instance of this difficulty in the coexistence of time,

bitrantur, qui stellarum cursum et motus causam dicunt humanorum esse gestorum." (De Princ. præf. i. 5.)

[1] These observations may tend to explain the frequent indefinite use of the term pantheism. Dr. Hampden speaks of Aquinas and Bonaventura as pantheists. Dr. Pusey answers truly that their expressions are not so strong as those of Scripture. Similarly, Mr. Theodore Parker makes St. John a pantheist.

and space, and things therein, with the absolute eternity and infinity of the Most High. All experience knowledge necessarily comes to man under conditions of space or time. The operation of the Almighty in creation is seen under these conditions. But no indefinite extension of space or time can ever reach His absolute infinity or eternity. There is thus something incomprehensible in His relation to His works. Hence the old questions already noticed—Was there ever a time when He existed without His works? And why did creation begin at some particular moment rather than any other, after an elapsed eternity? For if there were once a time when the finite did not exist, we seem to want a cause of its commencement at one particular point of time and space rather than another. These questions may be shown to be unreasonable, but the mystery of the coexistence of finite and infinite remains.

18. A similar difficulty occurs in many other questions. It is felt in the attempt to reconcile the transient causes of creation with the abiding presence of the Creator. Existing rocks record the ebbing and flowing of seas, and, by impressions of rain drops, even the direction of the wind, at some epoch ages before the creation of man. Yet reason and revelation concur in the conclusion, that finite existence is in some way dependent on the Creator, at every moment of its continuance. Thus the Divine Agency appears to be both immanent and transient in creation. But in what sense can it be both? How far is it this or that? Can it be both at once in the same phenomenon? Such questions are beyond the sphere of man.

Pantheism is an attempt to evade the difficulty. Spinoza makes that which is eternal in its essence, to be eternal in all the efects of its being. Finite things, therefore, can not be immediate effects of the Divine Essence or Agency, but each one is determined, not merely in its limits, but to its existence and operation, by some previous finite cause, and this again by a former, and so on to infinity.[1] And yet it is a fundamental truth with him, that God is the immanent Cause of all things, the essential Cause of their existence. According to the scholastic expression, "*Deus est causa essendi rerum.*"[2]

[1] Eth. i. 28.

[2] Ib. i. 18; 24. Corol.; 25.

These passages give us another instance of lofty words signifying nothing. How are we to reconcile the two statements—"He is the abiding Cause of all things," and "All things cause one another in an infinite chain of being?" By the doctrine that God and all things are identical. By giving the Divine Name to the infinite chain of atheism. We keep closer to the conditions of knowledge, when we confess the Most Highest to be known to us as the intelligent and beneficent Creator, and ourselves incompetent to understand Him as He is.

19. The theist finds a similar difficulty in reconciling the Divine supremacy with human freedom, and understanding how it is that the Divine purpose is fulfilled by means of human agency in individuals and in history, and even through the instrumentality of evil: and again, how, in a course of nature bound in unerring laws, there can be a special Providence who answers prayer. It is not difficult to make out that the habit of prayer is as rational in philosophy as it is found in practice to be effectual. But on the question of its relations to the laws of nature, we soon arrive at the limits of knowledge. The last answer will be the same as the first, and first or last it is a wise answer—"It exceeds our limited comprehension." This was the answer that Spinoza learned from Des Cartes;[1] and if he had been satisfied with the manifest truth, he would have spared the world the frequent trouble of misunderstanding an unintelligible system. But according to himself, nothing can exceed our understanding; there is no such thing as an incomprehensible.[2] Unable then to extend the faculties beyond the insuperable limits which nature has imposed, he is obliged to deny the existence of every thing beyond these limits. Unable to raise the mind to the infinite, he must degrade the infinite to the mind. So true it is, that his philosophy is that of those who think they must comprehend all the mysteries of being.

20. In endeavoring to avoid his errors, philosophy must found itself on the facts of observation and consciousness: and of these none are more certain than that there is war in the universe;

[1] Cogitata metaph. i. iii. § 10.

[2] His departure from Des Cartes on this point is pointed out in Meyer's preface to the Principia Philos. Cartes.

that in the world around us and in ourselves, there is a contention between good and evil. This truth is as certain as the fact that we exist at all; and supplies the evidence that though God is the Author of all things, yet all things are not God. We have the choice of believing that there is war in the Divine Nature, or war in a world of creatures. Reason can not admit the Creator Himself to be subject to change, or chargeable with imperfection or inconsistency. It can believe in the communicated existence of inferior beings, though the act of creation be incomprehensible, and finds in their independence its solution, or partial solution, of the existence of evil.

The possibility of evil is thus the alternative of pantheism. If beings exist in any degree capable of acting with independent power, it becomes at once possible that their power may be turned against that which gives them life. It is a fearful thing to contemplate. Without question, there must be something awful in the contention of the finite with the Infinite, in the striving of man with his Maker; and in this truth we may perhaps find one solution of the remarkable prevalence of pantheism in all ages and countries. "One can not sufficiently admire," says Bayle,[1] "that so extraordinary a notion, and so full of absurd contradictions, should insinuate itself into the souls of so many, so remote from each other, and so different in humors, education, customs, and genius."

The truth is, if all things be not God, if all do not exist IN Him, yet created souls are not separate from the Creator, unless their derived powers have been turned backward against their source. They are in communion with Him, unless they have chosen to be independent, and have allowed His influences to pass unheeded. This conjecture of reason is the plain and positive doctrine of revelation. Pantheism expresses the astonishment of reason to see nature separate from God. It is the speculation of the soul which ought to be one with the Eternal, but is robbed of the Divine treasure, and can not realize her loss.

But it is vain to sigh for a speculative unity, when the moral unity is broken. It is vain to deny the mystery of change, because

[1] Dict., Art. Japan.

we can not see how it is to be reconciled with the existence of the Unchangeable. It is vain to attempt, by means of syllogisms, to represent the Creator and His universe as one shoreless, waveless ocean, profound, equable, unbroken.

There is, indeed, an ocean of being, and the soul which sighs and reasons may think itself a wave upon the surface. But in one sense the comparison fails to hold. It is not at the mercy of the winds, nor wholly determined by the vast waters which support it. It has a unity and a moving power of its own. In another sense the comparison holds good. The war of elements, the confusion we see every where, belong only to the surface. The ocean is deeper than the waves. It can not be influenced by the winds of time, nor stirred from its place by the billows which dash themselves, and foam, and are broken on the shore of human life.

"The floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their waves," but "the Lord on High is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea."

BOOK II.

THE DIRECT EVIDENCES OF NATURAL THEISM.

CHAPTER I.

CHARACTER OF THE EVIDENCES.

1. Spontaneous Knowledge. — 2. Mathematical Proofs. — Analytical and Synthetical Judgments.—3. Empirical Knowledge.—4. *A priori* Proofs. — 5. Kant's Sense of *a priori*. — 6. Mathematical Proof not the only Ground of Certainty.—7. Limits of possible Knowledge.—8. Province of Reason.—9. Philosophy has given true Results.—10. Locke's Argument for the Being of God. — 11. Berkeley's Theism. — 12. Common Judgment of Locke and Berkeley.

THE investigation of the principles involved in the most elementary knowledge of existing things, shows that man is naturally more ready in acquiring it than in tracing it backward to its origin, or confirming its veracity to the reflective mind. This is true in the common knowledge of an outward world: we may expect it to be true in the demonstration of a First Cause of the world.

1. It may be anticipated that intelligent creatures of a Supreme Creator will be led, by some natural process in the constitution of things, to lift up their hearts in adoration, and their minds in humble acknowledgment, to the Great Being who has called them to life. But men may be drawn to God, and engaged in His worship, though unable to follow to its source the influence which moves them. In whatever way they may become acquainted with the truth that there is an eternal Lord of all, they must always be subject to the skeptical question, How can you vouch for the objective validity of this apparent knowledge? What proof have you that it is more than a delusive appearance, presented to you by some deceiving spirit, or by a false application of your natural principles of judgment?

An original conviction of this truth, which should be absolutely beyond question, can scarcely be conceived as within the bounds of possibility. Suppose the demand of extreme skepticism to have been fulfilled. Suppose the great truth had been written upon the sky, or impressed by an irresistible instinct of nature upon the minds of all; suppose an overpowering influence from God Himself had compelled us to the acknowledgment that He exists, yet we should not have been quite debarred from questioning the origin of this influence; and, if we had, the inability to ask questions would not have precluded the possibility of error. The atheist himself would scarcely desire an innate compulsory belief which stifled his darling faculty of skepticism. He would not choose to resign the privilege of asking why he must believe. And yet the question *why*, in such a case, must extend within the depths of being. He could not know why, without seeing whence and how the assurance arises in his mind; and to search the origin of an innate assurance is little less than to know why and how he exists at all.

2. Mathematical demonstrations have no place in questions of this kind. The mind can never gain the same kind of proof of any existence, whether of other men or of any common object of sensation, as of the properties of number or of geometry. And for manifest reasons. For in the one case, it has to deal with ideas and the relations of ideas wholly internal to itself; in the other, to pass from the internal thought to a world without. In the one case, the ideas may be perfect and self-adequate, for they have no relation to any thing beyond themselves; in the other, they are necessarily imperfect; they convey but a relative knowledge, and furnish us with but a partial and inadequate conception of the reality.

Thus in every question of numbers or of geometry we investigate relations instituted by the mind itself. Take the case of number. All questions relating to it are wholly subjective. We are able, it is true, to ask questions of objective significancy; such, for instance, as relate to the numerical diversity of the world around us, and the relations between its diversity and its unity. But such questions are foreign to the science of numbers. This

science, though ultimately founded on the perception of diversity, is wholly concerned about the relations of the mind's internal conceptions of unity and plurality. It has nothing to do with any outward signification of these ideas.

All numerical science is deduced from the construction of a numerical notation. The mind forms the notation by means of the addition of units, and the conceptions of distinct numbers thus successively formed. Thus two unities give the dual, one unity with the dual gives the triad, and so on to the limits of notation. But as soon as the notation has been constructed, every numerical operation, though it may increase our knowledge of the relations of numbers, yet only unfolds what was involved in the system itself. Thus the addition, $7+5=12$, though in one sense it may be called a synthetical[1] or ampliative judgment, that is, a judgment which increases our knowledge; yet, in another sense, it is an analytical or explicative judgment, since it unfolds what was implied in our previous conceptions, though unperceived. The equation has no meaning till we have already formed the number 12, and, in forming it, have added 7 to 5, whether we have taken notice of it or not.

The science of numbers is thus concerned with ideas of which the mind has a perfect comprehension. The same is true of geometry, which investigates the properties of figures formed in space by the mind itself. Here again we are not concerned with the objective significancy of the mind's conception of space. It is immaterial to geometrical science what space may be in itself; it is enough that the mind possesses the conception. And, as in arithmetic, the judgments are in one sense synthetical, in another analytical. They are synthetical, because knowledge is increased by the investigation of the properties of figures. The conception of a triangle, for instance, is that of a plane figure included within three straight lines which meet; and it is an addition to this conception to discover that its three angles are equal to two right angles. They are analytical, because they are implicitly contained in the definitions of the different figures, and are made evident by attention. But in both these sciences the mind is con-

[1] As it is considered by Kant, in the Introduction to the Pure Reason.

cerned with the relations of perfect ideas; and, on this account, is within the province of mathematical demonstration.

We possess the same absolute certainty in all logical or deductive reasoning. The conclusion follows strictly from the premises, and its truth is contingent upon theirs, and coextensive in validity. Here again it may be a question of words, whether the judgment in our inference is to be called analytical or synthetical. It was contained in the premises, and in one sense we may be said to have possessed it; but since we had not observed it, it may, in another sense, be considered an addition to our knowledge.

3. But this much is certain upon this disputed question, and this it is important to observe, that if these judgments be regarded as synthetical, it is in a very different sense from that in which judgments of experience are synthetical. Take the judgment—*All bodies are heavy.* The conception of body can not by any means be made to give the conception of heaviness; but this conception is derived from experience, and is added to others to amplify the compound conception of what we call body or matter. All our notions of matter are combinations of conceptions which we derive from experience, but of which we can never ascertain why they are combined in any particular instance. Gold, for example, is yellow, and very heavy, and very ductile, and has other peculiar properties of its own; but, independently of these properties discovered to us by experience, we have no knowledge of the nature of gold, from which we can infer that a certain substance must possess such and such properties. There can here be no place for any thing like mathematical demonstration. The mind can not have a perfect idea of the nature of gold, but must be content to combine the results of experience, and to regard them as constituting the substance itself, although they are only manifestations of its unknown nature. The assertion, then, that *gold exists*, can mean no more than that among the natural substances of the world, there is one distinguished from the rest by the union of certain properties, which are found invariably to go together.

Thus every affirmation of existence is manifestly out of the field of mathematical proof. It implies something which can not, like

numbers or geometrical figures, be brought within the compass of the understanding. And this is true, whether we consider the existence of the world, of one's self, of other men, or of the Supreme Being.

4. But may we not have an *a priori* demonstration of this truth? The question must be answered by another: What is an *a priori* demonstration? Strictly speaking, it is a proof that something *must* be, founded on the mind's perfect intuition of its nature, or of that on which it depends. Thus we may be said to prove *a priori* the properties of the circle; because we have a perfect conception of the figure, and discover its properties, by investigating from our construction of the circle what they must be. It is manifest that there can be no such proof of the Being of God. We can not, by any flight of thought, gain intuition of the Divine Nature, nor read the mysteries of His Essence. We have no intellectual faculty, whose gaze can penetrate to the brightness of the eternal Majesty. We must have been equal with God, to possess an *a priori* demonstration of His necessary existence. We are wholly incompetent to comprehend even our own existence, or that of the meanest object of the senses. However we may search the principles of knowledge, and examine the ground of certitude, there will always, in comparison of mathematical demonstration, be a bare possibility of conceiving that the wide world and its multitudes of living beings, the deep firmament and its countless lights, with all our empirical knowledge, are but the phantoms of a vision.

5. But there is another sense in which a proof of the Divine existence may be called *a priori;* namely, when it rests on principles, and is deduced from conceptions which have their origin in the mind, and are wholly innate. This would be a pure reason demonstration. But the reason, considered by itself, can not go beyond the mind, and therefore gives only subjective results. Its conclusions can be no more than conceptions, not cognitions of real being. It is therefore exposed to that searching criticism, which professes to reduce the theological ideals to unavoidable illusions; unless its witness be confirmed by principles of objective signification. But when this is the case, it may afford a valuable testi-

mony to the truth. We shall have occasion to observe that the decisions of Kant upon this topic are unfair and improbable.

6. But it will be universally admitted that there are truths, to be known with no less certainty than the properties of mathematical figures, which yet are not demonstrable by mathematical processes. Such are the existence of one's self, of the world, and of other men. If we ask the atheist why he admits the existence of other men, and not of One above man, he will probably say it is because he sees them. But to see proves no existence whatever, certainly not that of intelligent and active beings. It is not the sight of his body which discovers to a man his own existence. Several facts of consciousness must be observed and combined and compared, before he can either affirm that he exists, or understand the meaning of the term. He must in like manner observe the appearance and actions which are presented to him by other men, and must compare them with his own, before he can know that they exist. This knowledge is attained in early life, whether by the natural powers of the mind, or by revelation, or by secret influence through an unseen agent connecting mind with mind, or by whatever means and whatever name we may designate the instruction of nature. It is by an inductive process that the mind becomes aware of the existence of others.[1] A spontaneous induction is necessary, that it may infer from the appearance or actions of a man the existence of a being like itself. The inference becomes at length a matter of association; but can never, as in geometry, give an immediate nor a perfect knowledge. Hence the demand of the atheist for a strict demonstration of theism which can defy skepticism, is answered by the question, whether he has any such demonstration of the existence of other men. It is true the Supreme Being is not visible like a man, but it is not the sight of a man that proves him to exist. Sight is a witness who delivers his testimony to the supreme human faculty of reason. Reason then may have as good evidence of the Divine existence. It may discover in its knowledge of visible things, the evidence that there

[1] Malebranche has, "Les âmes des autres hommes, il est manifest que nous ne les connaissons que par conjecture." (Recherche, Liv. iii. Part ii. c. vii. § v.)

must exist One superior to the visible. As it receives from sight the evidence that there is an outward world; so it may receive from the moral sense the evidence that there is a Moral Governor, and in the constitution of the mind and of the world around, may gain an indirect knowledge of His Character.

We have seen that the principle of causality is the connecting link between the subjective and the objective worlds. We shall find that the same principle, if it be trustworthy in this application, must bear us, whether we will or no, to a commencement of that world in a Cause independent of all causes. The unanimous assent of mankind shows that there is something in nature which leads to the belief in God. It has been attempted indeed to discredit the common belief, by ascribing it to "the childhood of intellect and experience." But the same objection applies to the common belief in the world, which has also been current from the infancy of the race. It has been reserved to its old age to call it in question; and this, it seems, is not the only, nor, in some respects, the worst folly of its dotage. For the atheist who believes in the world can give no account of its unity in multiplicity; can assign no cause of its harmony in diversity. The idealist has a basis of unity in the unity of his *ego*. If the atheist refuses to go beyond nature, it may be demanded why he goes beyond himself. Let him extend his skepticism consistently to its limits; let him regard all appearance as illusory. But if he allow the existence of an objective world, let him carry out, to the full extent of its application, the principle of judgment which has guided him. He will find it to be an unavoidable conclusion from his own admissions, that the finite must rest upon the Infinite, the temporal on the Eternal, the caused on the Uncaused, the conditioned on the Unconditioned. He will find that the world he sees demands one Cause of existence, one Combiner of its diversity.

7. It is true that the principles of common knowledge, which lead us to a commencement of the world of finite causes and conditions, in a Being superior to these conditions, can not go on to manifest the internal nature of the First Cause, nor any internal conditions determining the origin of the world from Him, or its manner of dependence upon Him. But this is no more than is

universally true of human knowledge. That of any existing being is a knowledge, not of his internal nature, but of its outward effects or manifestations. We have an immediate perception of effects, but never more than a mediate knowledge of their causes. Even of the properties of bodies we know but a part: of their inward nature, as, for instance, of the diversities of molecular arrangement, which cause some substances chemically the same to exhibit wholly different properties; and of the secret causes on which physical properties are dependent, we are totally ignorant. What is there in the nature of things that causes gold to be so heavy and potassium so light? and why are different metals of different colors? what is it in their nature that gives them their different relations to light? Science may find partial answers to such questions; but the answer always has the effect of only removing the difficulty one step farther from the first appearance to the inward nature of things, and there leaving it much the same as it was before. The same may be said of our knowledge of men. We perceive certain differences of conduct, which imply differences of inward character and temperament, but of the soul in itself we know nothing.

We may expect our knowledge of the Supreme Being to be subject to the same conditions. We may well be satisfied with that mediate knowledge of His Nature, which is such as we possess of the least object in the world. The knowledge of the absolute is beyond us. We can know God not as He is in Himself, not in the depths of His Essence, not in the hidden source of all being; not even in the inscrutable processes of His Wisdom, nor in the dependence of His unsearchable Judgments upon His eternal Nature. We know Him only as He is to man. We can have such partial and inadequate knowledge, as may be deduced from His dealings with mankind; His agency in creation, in providence, in redemption; His revelation of Himself in conscience, and in those special messages and interpositions which have been authenticated by miracles. We may easily believe that all we can know, and all that could be included within human conceptions would fall infinitely short of the fullness of Divine truth. So that a theology which should pretend to unfold the whole nature of the Infinite,

and to bring it within the limits of human understanding, would stand self-confuted by the very pretension.

Our evidences, then, upon the important subject before us, will be found to be similar in principles, in method, in validity, to those of every existence beyond our immediate thoughts. Our knowledge must be inductive, not deductive. We can not make intuition of the Divine Nature, and thence deduce His necessary Attributes; we must become acquainted with His Character, as with His Being, through the manifestations of it in His works. Nature advances from causes to effects; knowledge goes backward from effects to causes. But we are so constituted by the Creator, that our knowledge of Him, as we might expect, is as spontaneous and universal as that of ourselves.

8. But the question will arise: How can any principles by which we have cognition of the world or of ourselves as objects of experience, be extended to the cognition of the Supreme Being, whom we conceive to be transcendent to all experience? Reason with its irrefragable principles, whatever they may be, may inform man of things seen and felt, but how can it rise above them to God? Must it not obviously be incompetent for the problem? If nature be the field of intelligence, what faculty can transcend nature? Must we not want another intelligence, to pass from nature up to nature's God?

A general answer to the question may be given in the first instance.

(1.) If the nature which is known be the only existent being, one would expect that the faculties of knowledge which it has developed, must be able to find in nature the answer to all possible questions, the satisfaction of all possible inquisitiveness. That which has given us the power of asking questions, must contain within itself, one would conjecture, the means of furnishing us with an answer. But if, in every faculty which can attain knowledge, and in every object which can be known, there be something that directs the mind to existence beyond what can be known; there is then ground for expecting, that both outward nature as it is presented to the mind, and inward nature as expressed in the faculties, rest in a Being greater than the nature

which is known, and derive from Him their existence and their powers.

(2.) Let it be granted that nature, as manifested in the soul and in the world, is the province of reason. Yet in itself it is unknown. Reason is obliged to regard it as the manifestation of occult causes, and is compelled, as we have seen, to make its choice between one and many incomprehensibles. It demands an unknown substratum of the visible, and an unknown essence of the intelligent; and may thus be led to an unknown Cause of both, wherein to find the cause and explanation of their marvelous relationship.

(3.) Reason may apply itself reflectively, and may see that the conditions of its knowledge of nature direct it to a Being above nature. It may perceive that the very principles which discover the existence of its subject or object are outraged by the denial of a Being superior to them both. If these principles be incompetent to bear the intelligence to God, yet they may manifest their own insufficiency. They may fall into inconsistency with themselves, when it is attempted to confine the reason within the limits of its world-knowledge, and may not be found to be self-consistent till they rest on the admission of a Being superior to nature.

Thus far, as a general answer to the question of the province of reason. The whole result of our inquiry should be no other than that, of all the truths which can be known, the existence of the Supreme Being rests on evidences the most extensive, multifarious, and irresistible. Nature is the hieroglyphic of God. Every part of nature, within and without the mind, furnishes a new key to its meaning. It may be interpreted by various methods, but its meaning is always found to be the same: "There is a Being, All Powerful, Wise, and Good, by whom every thing exists."

9. And this has been the conclusion, not only of the common sense of men, but of the wisest and best philosophers. From those who would confine the reason, and quell the noblest aspirations of the soul, we hear much of the vagaries of philosophy, and of recurring systems of error, with their vain strivings after hidden knowledge, which have successively risen up and been set aside. We hear in modern times of Locke, pious and sincere in religion, earnest and intelligent in the investigation of truth, but with a sys-

tem essentially skeptical, which had its legitimate development at home in the idealism of Berkeley, and the skepticism of Hume, and its just representation abroad in the specious superficialness of Condillac. We hear of Berkeley as unsurpassed for acuteness and for elegance of style, and the possessor of

"Every virtue under heaven,"

but still farther inclined down the fearful steep of skepticism.

This account we have already seen to be but partial, even as regards that department of philosophy which investigates the *origin* of knowledge. But our subject leads us to judge by a different standard. It requires us to estimate a philosophical system by the effect of its principles in their application to the common and acknowledged cognitions of mankind. From this point of view, it may be a matter of comparatively slight importance, whether a writer may have held a theory of presentative or representative perception of the world. But it is of the greatest consequence whether or no he held the principle of objective causation, and applied it to establish the truths of common judgment, that there is a world, a human soul, and a Creator. From this point of view, it must appear that Locke and Berkeley are constantly misrepresented, when they are connected with the skepticism of Hume.

Both these philosophers maintained that the mind effects the passage from subjective to objective by its principle of causality. Locke, for instance, distinctly enunciates that it is by this means we become acquainted with the existence of the world;[1] and maintains the sufficiency of this mediate knowledge for all the purposes of life. He employs the same principle to establish our knowledge of the existence of God, on that of our own existence; and his arguments on this subject deserve a short notice. (Essay, Book iv. chap. x.)

10. In § 2 he argues, that "Man knows that he exists, and that he is something;" an assumption which the reader may be apt to think might still be made without apology or explanation.

[1] Bk. iv. c. xi. Mr. Rogers, in the article already referred to, points out that Locke, in his controversy with Stillingfleet, enunciates causality as "a true principle of reason."

§ 3. "In the next place he has an intuitive certainty that bare nothing can not produce any real being." Therefore, "from eternity there has been something."

§ 4. "Next it is evident that what had its being and beginning from another must also have all that which is in and belongs to its being from another too. All the powers it has must be owing to, and received from, the same source. This Eternal Source, then, of all being must be the Most Powerful."

§ 5. He goes on similarly to show, by another application of the causal principle, that the Source of being must be intelligent. If there had been a time, he argues, when the Eternal Being was void of understanding, then "it was impossible there should ever have been any knowledge." Consequently, a Being Most Powerful and Intelligent must have existed eternally; that is, there is a God.

This conclusion is confirmed (§ 9, 10) by the argument that man can know or conceive but "two sorts of beings, cogitative and incogitative." "But it is as impossible to conceive that ever bare incogitative matter should produce a thinking intelligent being, as that nothing should of itself produce matter."

This demonstration, it is evident, rests wholly on the principle of causality objectively applied.

11. It would be no less easy to show, that notwithstanding his denial of the existence of matter independently of the mind, yet the same principle is employed by Berkeley, as it is by all mankind, consciously or unconsciously, in effecting the passage from the subjective to the objective. And there is an objective world in Berkeley's system, as well as in any other, only that world is here the Supreme Being Himself. We hear much of Berkeley's doctrine of the existence of matter, but very little of his doctrine of the Supreme Being. And yet his "Minute Philosopher" contains principles and arguments which exactly meet the skepticism of the present day, and are not easily met or refuted.[1]

12. We have reason to enter a protest against the sentence which condemns Locke and Berkeley, as unwilling accomplices in the skepticism supposed to be deduced from their principles by Hume.

[1] See especially Dial. iv.

It is easy to criticise men when they are dead, and to lead the custom of judging them partially and from one particular point of view. But it may be imagined that both these philosophers, if they were to rise to life, would be mightily surprised to find in what company their labors had been classed by posterity.

"What!" they might exclaim, "are we charged with a theory which denies all objective significancy to the notion of cause or power, when it was through this very door that we found the passage from ideas to things?"

"But then," it might be replied to Locke, "your representation theory, which made the mind directly cognizant of nothing beyond its own ideas, led the way to skepticism."

"Representation!" might be the rejoinder; "yet, after all, the picture of nature, which is visible to sight, is confessed by every school to be something different from nature in its reality. The question, then, between mediate and immediate perception, between presentative and representative knowledge, can be but secondary, unless in the immediate perception you gain a knowledge of the actually existing thing, and not mere relative knowledge or phenomenon. After so many years of thought, what have you gained at the best but a theory of relative cognition? and does this give you any deeper insight into real existence?"

"But then you derived all knowledge from experience, and with it even the notion of causality, and this was sure to lead to skepticism."

To this also he would have an answer. "He admitted, however, that man had faculties fit to attain knowledge, and did not derive *them* from experience. It was only the reflective knowledge of the causal principle that he pretended to deduce from this source; he never doubted its possession by the mind among its original faculties. This possession was not a matter of knowledge but of nature, and it did not fall within his purpose to inquire into it. But he plainly allowed it to be unquestionable, and assumed and employed it, in his inquiries into our knowledge of the world and of God."

Suppose, then, our modern philosopher to turn next to the ghost of the bishop. "You, however, even denied the existence

of matter, and it was an easy step from this to deny the existence of spirits."

"But what reality had he denied? None but that of an unknown substratum of qualities, which you admit possesses no originating causality of its own, and seldom regard even in the light of a secondary cause. At the best, you can but know it by its properties, and are obliged to regard these as communicated powers; yet you can not tell whether they are derived from the bygone act of a finished creation, or are the manifestations of a continued agency. So that, after all, it is only an unknown incomprehensible *something*, of which you are uncertain whether it can be said to possess power, that you think it necessary to place between God and the soul. It was my doctrine," he might add, "that the existence of matter consists in a Divine operation. Your modern philosophy assigns it an existence of its own, but whether independent or dependent in its present nature, pretends not to determine; and must confess, in either case, that it rests ultimately in the Divine operation. If, then, matter in itself be unknown, it may be the immediate agency of the Creator on the theory of perception. Even the strictest doctrine of immediate perception, may be immediate perception of that Divine agency.

But one truth is certain. We are immediately cognizant of an action and reaction of internal and external power. This, the very truth which Hume's skepticism had sought to undermine, *he* had strenuously maintained, and had applied to establish our knowledge of the soul and of God, on a basis at least as firm as that on which other philosophers have founded their knowledge of the soul and the world."

By such arguments, and for such reasons, both Locke and Berkeley might justly claim to dissolve all connection with skepticism. They would stand apart both from Hume's skepticism and from Kant's; from Hume's, which subverted all philosophy by its denial of causation; from Kant's, which subverted all objective philosophy by making causality to be subjective. They might well wonder to see that Britain had, in so many years, added so little to their labors; and that Germany, with all its intellectual activity, and in its recoil from the supposed skepticism, had devised an

atheistical idealism[1] in place of the theistical idealism of Berkeley; and had then advanced, in the school of Hegel, to a skepticism more dogmatical than Hume's. They might read in these melancholy results the sure consequences of every attempt to establish a philosophy, without laying the notion of cause or power in its objective validity at the foundation. They might in this respect lay claim to the honors of common sense for their agreement with the universal judgment of mankind.

CHAPTER II.

ON SPACE AND TIME.

1. What is Space?—2. The Condition of Phenomena.—3. Not merely subjective.—Whence its Universality and Necessity?—4. What is it in itself?

1. In proceeding to inquire farther respecting the limits of knowledge, and to establish our knowledge of God on the unavoidable cognition of our own being, a primary question which demands a short attention is that of the objective reality of space; for it is evident that the only known properties which are inseparable from matter, are those which depend on its relations to space. Other properties distinguish one kind of material substance from another, but do not belong to all matter. A doctrine of the real existence of matter must therefore depend on the reality of space. And this will be true, even though the essential reality of matter lie beneath its secondary, rather than its primary qualities; and these last be considered as relational, rather than essential.

In connection with this question, we might take the cognate one of time. But our remarks will apply, for the most part, to both space and time.

What are space and time? We must have ascertained the limits of knowledge upon this question, before we can advance a single step in philosophy. It is a question of considerable import-

[1] The egoistical idealism is strictly atheistical. But no opinion is given of Fichte.

ance in the evidences of the existence of God. It is also interesting from its application in the celebrated argument of Dr. Clarke; and derives still further importance from its relation to our conceptions of the Divine Attributes of Omnipresence and Eternity.

What are space and time? It is the easiest of all questions to answer, yet of all questions the most difficult. It seems as though the first and simplest, the most inevitable and universal conceptions of the mind, are exactly those which are most difficult of investigation. In fact, the notions which arise first into the mind's possession are those which lie at the greatest distance from the present consciousness. The simpler they are, the earlier in general they arise; and the earlier they arise, the farther the mind has to go back in tracing their origin and examining their meaning.

2. This much is certain, that the mind can not form to itself the conception *that there is no space.*[1] It may easily conceive the non-existence of matter; but empty space remains in its infinity, though all matter were annihilated. It is therefore, as Kant infers, a condition of the possibility of phenomena.

But here the difficult question arises: Is it a condition internal or external to the mind? Is it a subjective condition of the mind's capability of perceiving, or an objective condition by which something external is adapted to the mind's faculty of perception? Kant adopts the former alternative. He makes space to be a pure intuition, the form given by the innate sensibility of the mind to the unknown matter of the outward world. And he professes to prove that it is *nothing more than* a pure intuition, or subjective property which cleaves to the mind, and is the condition of its sensibility. He regards it as real in its relation to the sensibility, but independently of this—with reference to things as they are in themselves, it has only an ideal existence. He admits it to be possible, however, though not certain, that all finite thinking beings must necessarily coincide with man in this form of sensibility.

If this be true, it is easy to see what becomes of the theological argument from infinite space. No knowledge of objective exist-

[1] "Man kann sich niemals eine Vorstellung davon machen dass kein Raum sey." (Kant, ubi s. p. 35.)

ence can be founded on a subjective condition of sensibility. On such a basis we can establish nothing more than an ideal, and that not an ideal of the reason, but an ideal, if we may so speak, of the pure intuition.

3. But the foregoing principles will lead to a somewhat different conclusion upon space. Every distinct perception must have its own cause external to the mind. Each single object has its own proper nature, and contains within itself the causes of its action on the sensibility. But external objects, and parts of the same object, are perceived as separate from one another, and the separation is wholly independent of the mind. Hence, whether the primary qualities of body—those which depend on its space relations—be regarded as essential in the deep nature of things, or only relational, still it is evident that we may conceive each part of matter to have its own causes of sensation, either statically underlying or dynamically generating its separate phenomena in different parts of space.

Space, then, is necessary not only as the internal form of the intuition, and the condition of our ability to perceive; but also as the external condition of the presentation of objects to the mind.

We might seem, at first sight, to find an escape from this assertion, in regarding all phenomena as the effects of one immediate cause; or, in other words, as all produced immediately on the mind by One Real Being, Himself superior to all relations of space. But, even on this hypothesis, the One Cause must contain in Himself the cause or causes of the diversity and separateness of phenomena. There must, in some sense, be a separation in this diversity anterior to its appearance to the mind, and the cause of it. So that, in this case, space must be a determination, if not of the real existence, at least of the operation of that Cause of causes, and as such necessarily external to the mind.

But if the immediate causes on which all phenomena depend be not essentially one, each object of perception must then have, external to the mind, its causes combining to the formation of a distinct object, in some one of an infinite number of parts of objective space. Space is therefore something real, without reference to the mind, which separates the different objects from one another.

It appears, then, that whether matter be independent in existence, and contain all reality in itself; or it be dependent immediately or mediately upon the Supreme Being; there is a certain separation, one from another, of these phenomena by which it is known to the mind—a separation which is as certainly independent of the mind as the existence of matter itself. Hence it follows that space is something external, as well as internal to the subjective nature of the mind.

The mind, in short, is known as the subject of sensibility; matter as its object: the perception is inseparable from conditions of space, and therefore we ought to regard these conditions as inherent both in the mind and in the object; and have as good reason to attribute them to the one as to the other.

4. But how shall we account for the *universality and necessity* of our conception of space? To explain this, it is necessary to distinguish between the form of the intuition, and the reflective conception of space. The former is a latent condition of perception, which may either be native to the mind, or may be imparted to it in primary experience. Perception in space may be a necessary consequence of unknown relations in existence, which may impart to the intuition its inalienable form. But the reflective conception of space is evolved in common experience. This, however, has also the characteristics of universality and necessity. We can not form the notion of no-space. How then can the universal conception have been derived from experience?

In this way. Experience, it is true, can never give us universal and necessary notions of things external to the mind. It can only discover that things are constituted in a certain manner, not that they *must* be so universally and necessarily. Yet it may bring to the reflective consciousness the mind's native principles of knowledge, which may at once be apprehended as of universal application. The absoluteness which attaches to the notion—the necessity we are under of regarding infinite space as embracing all finite spaces, and not these as composing it—could not indeed arise from experience commonly so called; but may very well be a result of experience discovering to us our native faculties, or those principles of knowledge which had their origin in primary

experience. In short, the *a priori* intuition of space is the foundation of the *a posteriori* conception, and enters into it.

5. One more question remains. We have considered the relations of space to the mind as perceiving subject; to the world as object perceived. But what is space in itself? What are its relations to mind and matter, in their fundamental reality? What to the Supreme Being?

It is easy to ask the questions. Their answers must be left to those who can follow back the fountain of life to its Source. On the last question, however, it may be remarked, that reason, as we shall see, requires for its basis of knowledge a Being superior to all relations of space and time. It agrees in this respect with the popular conception of the Infinite Being. We are accustomed to consider our knowledge of Him, as removed from the common notions of extension and duration. We think of Him as every where present, yet not extended; as eternal, yet not enduring.

But the question—what is space in itself? still remains where it was. Is it mere nonentity, neither God nor a creature, as Dr. Watts supposes?[1] or something merely relative—an order of coexistences, as time is an order of succession; according to the opinion of the illustrious Leibnitz?[2] or is it, according to his peer and contemporary Sir Isaac Newton,[3] a determination of the Divine Attribute of Infinity? or the very Attribute itself, as Clarke sometimes appears to think?[4] or is it, we might add, an arbitrary creation, the tablet on which God has been pleased to draw the picture of the universe?[5]

They who are able may answer the questions; and when they have answered them, they will be able to estimate the force of a theistic argument, founded on the idea of infinite space.

[1] Phil. Essays.

[2] Correspondence with Clarke, Letter iii. art. 4, etc.

[3] "Adest semper et durat ubique, et existendo spatium et tempus constituit." (Schol. gen.) This appears to be the opinion of Malebranche. (Entret. viii. 4.)

[4] On the Being and Attributes, iii.

[5] This appears to be Bayle's notion. Dict., art. Zarbarella.

CHAPTER III.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL AND OF THE WORLD.

1. Fundamental principle.

1. In examining the theories of existence, no signs of life were to be discovered in the abortions of materialism. We must look in another direction to prosecute the inquiry concerning the Source of being.

For this purpose some further observations are necessary on the character of our knowledge of the world and of the soul, and of their distinction from one another as different orders of beings.

It has been already seen that every perception contains two distinct elements—one having its origin in the mind itself, the other in the world without. It may be conjectured that these elements are totally inseparable. But our subject does not demand any minute examination of this difficult question.

It is enough for our purpose to have observed that all immediate knowledge, whether of mind or matter, is of appearances; but that we are able, and indeed are under the necessity of referring every phenomenon to its unknown cause. We have therefore an indirect knowledge of the reality of things. We are able to affirm that it exists; and, farther, that it contains a diversity corresponding to the diversity of phenomena. Sometimes, as in the sight of objects, the mind can trace a causal process of several steps between the distant object and the consciousness; but it always reaches, after one or a few steps, to the limits of what can be known. It can then advance no farther than to affirm, that the unknown contains the cause of every phenomenon of the known; and that the various causes existing in the unknown are to be estimated by their first results in the cognition.

SECTION I.

PSYCHOLOGY: OR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL.

2. Foundation of this Knowledge.—3. Rational Psychology.—4. The Soul as Substance.—5. As simple Substance.—6. As identical in different Times.—7. Locke's Account of personal Identity.—8. Incorruptibility not deducible.

2. These observations apply then to the mind's knowledge of itself as an existing soul. It has no immediate apperception of itself as an objective being, but is under the natural necessity of referring the phenomena of thought, will, affection, to a real cause, and is thus led to know itself as a real being.

Thus, through the causal principle of the reason, the subjective consciousness furnishes decisive proof of some objective existence. The same primary experience, which delivers to the mind the phenomena of self-consciousness, teaches it to refer them to an existing soul, and to acknowledge its existence to be something which is manifested by thought, but does not consist in thought; something, on the contrary, which is prior to thought and the cause of it.

3. The common conclusions upon the nature of the soul are three: (1) The soul is *substance;* (2) It is *simple* substance; (3) It is *identical* in different times. These conclusions are criticised by Kant, whose examination of the mind's pretensions to a scientific knowledge of the soul, the world, and the Supreme Being, forms the most interesting portion of the celebrated Critique. "This substance," he says, "furnishes the conceptions of *immateriality;* as simple substance, of *incorruptibility;* its identity as intellectual substance gives *personality;* these three articles together give *spirituality.*"[1] It must be noticed that the soul, as substance, is regarded as the subject of those faculties by which it is known as different from matter.

4. The preceding conclusions are regarded by the great philosophical critic as paralogisms. And justly so, when they pretend to unfold the essential nature of the soul. The knowledge of myself, as the subject of thought, can not discover that myself, "as

[1] Rein. V. p. 278. Trans. Dial. B. ii. c. i.

object, am a being or substance independently existing."[1] No fact of consciousness can make known any ultimate cause or manner of existence as lying within the objective self. But it is taking away the foundation of all knowledge, to say that the objective self is "a mere empty representation, of which we can not even affirm that it is a conception, but only a bare consciousness which accompanies all conceptions."[2] The objective self — the soul, in plain terms—is something more than a conception; it is known as a real power; known, not indeed in itself, but as the proximate cause of the subjective thought, the possessor of certain faculties, the author of certain effects, and existing prior to these effects.

This knowledge of the soul is independent of any theory of existence, and differs from that of Kant, in the application of the causal principle, to carry us from subjective appearance to objective being. It admits, however, that this being can be but indirectly known and inadequately described; but affirms with certainty that it is a power which, by action and reaction with the world, gives rise to the results presented in the mind.

Matter also, as well as mind, may be said to be known as substance. The two are distinguished in all knowledge by their properties. The one is intellectual, the other physical substance; the one acts with choice, the other is inert. The mental faculties have already engaged our attention at some length. The important question of the mind's originating power will be considered in Section III.

5. It is through the same principle of causality that we gain all the knowledge we can have of the soul as simple substance. The feeling of the unity of self, which attaches to the mental history of every man, must be referred for its cause to some internal property of the soul. Beyond the fact that you are compelled in every mental action to regard yourself as one being; one to whom information is brought in every perception, who commands in every act of will, who decides in every judgment; beyond this feeling of the unity of self, you can not help searching for a cause

[1] "Ein für mich selbst bestehendes Wesen oder Substanz sey." Ib. p. 788.

[2] Ib. p. 278.

of it; and this cause must be considered to lie, where you are wont to place it, in the unknown nature of the soul.

6. We must, in like manner, have a cause in the soul of the natural feeling of our continued identity. Every perception affirms the existence of mind and object, and that not at a single point of time, but continued for a definite period. This is manifest. No perception can be instantaneous; the mind and object must continue during the perception without apparent change, or experience is impossible. The knowledge of continuance of existence is thus a result of our primary experience.[1] But in this case, as in the two former, we advance only the single step, to which causality leads us, from the inward consciousness to the objective field beyond.

The soul, then, can be known to exist as objective substance, and to contain in itself the cause of its conscious unity and identity. But the nature of its existence, the reality of its unity and identity are unknown.

7. Hence we may understand the meaning of those who hold with Locke, that personal identity consists in consciousness. Strictly speaking, it can consist only in the unknown nature of the soul; but in our ignorance of its nature we are obliged to connect its identity with one of its subjective results or manifestations. It will be difficult to find one more convenient than consciousness. It need not be incessant and uninterrupted; it is enough that it can be renewed from time to time by the memory. If it be demanded whether we are to infer that a man's personal identity is lost, if he lose his continuity of consciousness, as in insanity; it is enough for all practical purposes to answer, that whether it have ceased or not, he has for the present lost all knowledge of it, and therefore it is as good as lost to him.

8. From such knowledge of the soul as simple substance, it is plainly impossible to draw any proof of incorruptibility or immortality. The common argument to this effect would go to show

[1] Hence the origin of our confidence in the veracity of memory. Every single perception is a proof of its truthfulness. The difference between the mind's retention of impressions during the time necessary to perception, and its continued remembrance of the past, is only a difference of degree.

that the soul is uncreate as well as immortal;[1] because, if created, whatever be the process of creation, and whatever the soul's nature, it may cease to exist, as far as we can know, by the reversal of the process. According to Kant, there is a two-fold error in the argument; first, in the inference that unity of consciousness implies simplicity of substance; secondly, in the supposition that, if it do, the substance must necessarily be permanent. For, though it do not contain diversity nor multiplicity of parts, still it must possess *intensity of being*, or a certain *degree of reality*, in respect of that which constitutes existence. The substance of the soul may therefore be conceived to pass into nonentity, if not by division and corruption, yet by the gradual fading away of its essential powers.

Unaided reason has therefore no direct proof of the immortality of the soul. It can neither affirm that its immortality must be dependent on permanence of the same spiritual substance—any more than bodily identity depends on permanence of material substance; nor can it furnish any proof of the future continuance of consciousness. For any thing man can discover in himself, there may be causes within or without him which must terminate his existence, or subject him to transformation or transmigration. But we have the strongest indirect evidence of immortality in the soul's capacity for a higher and better life, in its moral nature, in its desire of immortality. There are manifested in nature innumerable instances of wise Design, and a wondrous adaptation of all things to their ends. And the relation between the soul and the world discovers them to be the works of One Creator. Thus the wise Power which has wrought in the world, gives the soul assurances of immortality in itself.

[1] Given, for instance, in Bishop Butler's Analogy.

SECTION II.

COSMOLOGY: OR KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATERIAL WORLD.

9. Properties of Matter.—Relations to Space.—Physical Properties.—10. Rational Cosmology.—11. Free-will and Inertia.

9. Matter, as well as mind, is known only by its phenomena. It is indirectly known as substance, that is, as a system or systems of occult causes of phenomena. But the various properties under which it is apprehended may be seen to be no more than certain relations among its different substances, or relations under which it is presented to the mind. Thus in the perception of a distant colored surface, the color appears to be a property of matter, and is so regarded. And yet it is evidently not in the body, as it is perceived by the mind. The mental apperception is separated from its outward occasion by a causal process of several steps. The mind is immediately cognizant of a certain affection of the brain or optic nerve, which is produced by an image of the colored object on the expanded nerve or retina of the eye. And this image is formed by rays of light, which pass from the object to the eye. In the object itself, color can be no more than a certain form or property of the surface, which causes it to separate particular rays from the spectrum of light, and disperse them in greater abundance, while it absorbs the rest. Yet, when the mind has learned how it gains the perception, it still sees the color as something in the external object. This is not a matter of choice, but a necessity of nature; and consequently the name of color is attached, not to any real thing, but to an appearance.

Nor do we gain any knowledge of matter in its essential nature from the qualities which depend on its relations to space—shape, extension, divisibility. For, in the first place, it has already appeared that we have no more than a relative knowledge of space itself. And, secondly, though we should conceive the mind to have an adequate and perfect intuition of the reality of space, still matter is not space, but something presented to us in space. The space retains its extension and divisibility, though the matter be removed. The shape is no longer marked out, but potentially it

is still there. It is true that extension must be considered a characteristic property of matter. But it can be no more than a relation of its occult causes. It implies a multiplication of the same substance, and therefore of the causes, whatever they be, in which lies the existence of the substance. But the essential nature of matter is the same in its parts as in the whole, and is therefore independent of form or magnitude. It is possible certainly that matter may consist of minute yet extended atoms, possessing their unchangeable, and perhaps various forms. But matter is not *known* as a system of atoms. In fact extension bears the same relation to the existence of matter, as it is known, which duration bears to that of either mind or matter. Neither of them can exist, except as enduring; matter can not exist, except as extended; but the question remains beyond—What is it that exists?

If we turn, then, to the other properties, mechanical, molecular, chemical; its attraction; its cohesion and elasticity; its simple constituents, and atomic proportions; its relations to heat, light, electricity; we still find that all knowledge is of phenomena. Science has already discovered the nature of matter, no less than that of light, to be such that even to a human mind perceiving by senses far more acute, the world would be no longer what it is to man, but a wondrous dance of atoms—a vast machine of an infinite number of discrete particles, each one moved by its own and other forces, and obeying natural laws; and the whole permeated, and perhaps combined, by fluids as subtile as that of light.

It is in these directions that physical science has been so much extended, and is destined to be extended much farther. It is more than probable that its researches will at length resolve the whole material world into a few distinct elements and simple laws. Its course is to descend from law to law, and from cause to cause: but will it ever have sounded the nature of things in any direction, and be able to say—this is no longer phenomenon, but real, and primitive, and uncaused being? Till it can do this we must be content to acknowledge that matter is known only as phenomenon; that its reality, in the direction of all its qualities—its whole nature is unknown.[1]

[1] Origen has (De Princ. iv. 34) "Intellectu solo discernitur hoc quod

We have already seen the importance of this observation in the arguments of theism. It furnishes an answer to the atheist, when he demands as the condition of his belief in God, a knowledge of Him, which, it is evident, *he does not and can not possess, even of the world in which he lives.*

10. Thus we see that, however little we may know of the real nature of either mind or matter, we are warranted in ascribing to each of them its own existence, if not as independent, at least as distinct from one another beyond the field of consciousness. Whatever be our theory of existence, the principles of all knowledge compel us to regard them as separate from one another, on that margin of the hidden field of being, which borders immediately on the phenomenal world. They are distinct, at least as immediate preceding causes of the facts of consciousness.

Precisely as in the preceding section, we might arrange our knowledge of matter under the three conceptions; (1) Matter is *substance:* (2) It is not simple, but *multiplied:* (3) It is *diverse*, and corruptible.

Matter, then, is distinguished from mind, (1) by the total difference in all knowledge between physical and intellectual properties; (2) by its multiplied existence in space, which makes it extended and divisible—a notion inapplicable to the mind, which may therefore be said to be indivisible; (3) by its diversity of kinds, each possessing its peculiar physical properties. It has been called above "a genus of beings." Hence it is capable of composition and corruption, and rarely occurs in nature in a simple state. In mind, on the contrary, the different faculties are the same in all men, though they may possess different degrees of intensity; and the notion of composition is inapplicable.

11. But the most important ground of distinction remains to be

subjacet corporibus." Whence it was argued, even then, that matter is nothing but qualities, and the *substratum*, as it is called, a mere abstract notion. This confusion is still common; and will continue unless the distinction be drawn, not between sensible qualities and an intelligible substratum; but between matter in its relation to the senses, which is a subjective conception, and matter, *with all its qualities*, as it exists objectively, and contains the causes of the conception. The former distinction reduces matter to a nonenity.

considered. Mind is known as possessed of will or self-activity; matter by its inertia or causal dependence. This distinction is unquestionable, whatever question may be raised respecting its nature. The most rigid necessitarian will admit that the power of choice, or the power of originating motion in matter, is a faculty of mind which, at least as far as consciousness can extend, appears to be different from any mere physical property. Matter is known as that which never originates change or motion, but is changed or moved by every external agency, and retains or transmits the impressed force. It is a dead, insentient cause, or system of causes, affecting the sensibility, transmitting forces and actions, but always forces which are communicated to it, and are bound in fixed laws of nature. Mind, to the limits of knowledge, is distinguished from matter by its will. It is a living, intelligent cause. And it deserves notice that a leading characteristic of matter is, in effect, a negative quality. Inertia is the negation of self-activity, the chief characteristic of mind.

It has lately been attempted by M. Comte and other writers, to obscure this distinction between mind and matter, by stating that all matter is active, because all its particles are perpetually in motion. But the word active here conceals an ambiguity. It can hardly be pretended that the particles choose for themselves, whether they shall move up or down, to the right or left, any more than the earth can choose whether it will revolve from west to east, or from east to west. The molecular movements of matter no more disprove its inertia than the astronomical.

But the question ultimately reduces itself to that of the nature of the mind as an active power. Of the material universe it will be admitted to be true, that if, at any instant, it should regain all the exact conditions of existence which belonged to it at some former epoch, its whole series of states and changes would recur, and would go on eternally in a recurring period, or till changed by some action external to itself.

But can we make the same assertion of the universe of mind? The question can not be answered without considering more closely the origin of mental activity. Is consciousness trustworthy or il-

lusory, when the mind regards itself as possessed of an originating power?

The importance of the question, and its immediate bearing upon our subject will be admitted. The frequent, and often unwarrantable dogmatism of fatalists, may be an excuse for adding to discussions which may appear interminable. But these discussions have not been fruitless nor unprogressive.

SECTION III.

OF THE MIND AS AN ORIGINAL POWER.

12. Fatalism favors Atheism.—13. Mind free from physical Necessity.—14. The Will determined by Motives.—15. Power of the Reason.—16. Question of originating Power.—17. Origin of Motives.—18. Fatalism an Assumption.—19. Free-will a practical Truth.—20. Conclusion.

12. No question has been more frequently considered, few have been subject to greater mistakes, or been so often argued superficially; and perhaps none, even to this day, is more commonly involved in error and obscurity, yet at the same time decided with all the confidence of dogmatic assertion, than the question of Free-will. Jonathan Edwards and other necessitarians were long the received guides with many who were interested in such subjects, and there are not a few writers who still venture to assume it as a self-evident or established truth, that the assertor of liberty must be a bad logician.

Such an assumption is either that of the atheist, or of one who is the dupe of his fallacies. Once regard it as certain, that there *can* be no such thing as an absolute origination of the series of phenomena—once admit that all things are bound in the chains of necessity, and you take away all possibility of admitting the existence of a First Cause. Or if your chains of causes be considered to rest in the *moral necessity* of the Divine nature, you have then what is equivalent to a pantheism. Whether as a matter of fact an originating power reside *in man*, may be a matter of inquiry: but to maintain it to be an impossibility, is to deny the possibility of creation.

It is not surprising that the acute atheist is always a nece-

tarian. The question of spiritualism or materialism sinks into insignificance, and may become a mere matter of words, beside that of liberty and necessity. "The presence of law in mind," says a living atheist, "is to me the greatest fact in theology. To the theist it is the symbol of atheism and moral anarchy, while to me free-will seems the synonym of chaos in nature, of disorder in ethics, of confusion in life."

Is it not a fact, however, that there is disorder and confusion in life? And must it not follow that free-will is needed as its explanation? Doubtless an originating will in finite beings must lead to casualism. It should therefore be the aim of religion to introduce law to mind, to bring mind under the dominion of Divine law—from the disorder of ethics and the confusion of life to the moral necessity of life in God.

13. But let us examine some points of the question. And first with reference to phenomena. All will admit that there are certain mental facts which give us the idea implied in the term Will; and that we have an instinctive feeling of possessing an activity of our own. We have, at least, a certain appearance of freedom. It is implied in these facts that if we be not absolutely free, we are not, however, bound in a necessity of the same kind as that which governs the material world. We are not the slaves of any physical necessity.

In the material world there is always a certain uniformity and regularity of phenomena, which shows that each effect is produced by an adequate cause. Thus, if one billiard ball strike another, the second begins to move, but it is the motion of the first which is communicated. If a stone fall to the ground motion is originated, but the force was acting previously to the fall, and produced the weight of the body, according to a universal property of matter. The movements of the winds have their causes in the previous motions of the earth, and in the forces of attraction and expansion which act upon the air. The motions of the universe, the precession of the equinoxes, the planetary inequalities, afford striking examples of the permanence of material laws. There is the same uniformity and undeviating connection of cause and effect in all chemical actions. Matter, in short, may exhibit phenomena of incipient motion or action, but never of incipient prop-

erties or powers. Its various properties may be discovered under different circumstances, but exist in their causal potency in the matter itself, and are inseparable from it.

But the actions of man are, at all events, not bound in any necessity of this kind. Suppose one, for instance, to toss up a shilling with the resolve that he will be determined by its fall whether he shall walk to the right or left. And *suppose* it granted that an infinite chain of necessity has predetermined the force and direction of the fillip, the state of the air, the nature of the ground, and all the circumstances of motion. It is evident that the fall of the coin, though dependent upon conditions out of the man's calculation, is the necessary result of a course of fatalism.

But this chain of physical causes can not be said to determine the man's movement. There is no communication between the fall of the shilling and the fluids which move his muscles; and yet his movement to the right or left is decided by its fall. There is, therefore, some determining power in himself, acting through his thoughts at least, if not altogether originating in them, by which his movement is regulated to correspond with an outward occasion having no physical connection with it.

14. But it is often argued that the will is not free, because it is determined by motives, and by the stronger of conflicting motives rather than the weaker. The first part of this objection is true: the will is determined by motives. The second part is ambiguous; for how are we to know the stronger motive, except by its prevailing against the other? To say the will is moved by the stronger motive, is to state a truism which can convey no information. The question is, Does the mind possess an original power of giving strength to one motive rather than to another? Can it choose between two motives which shall be the stronger, and make it to be the stronger; or are all its motives influential, independently of any originating power of its own?

It is not necessary to answer this question before we can regard ourselves as possessed of a peculiar faculty which belongs to us as men, and is called Will. It is enough for this purpose to know that we are influenced by motives, of which the lower animals and dead matter are incapable. Matter is subject to forces, but

not to motives. Dumb animals have their desires and instincts, which correspond to the appetites of men, and are not motives but sensational impulses. Man alone is influenced by motives which spring from an æsthetic, intellectual, and moral nature, and can be viewed and modified by the reflective mind.

15. That motives arise from the reason is a fact beyond the reach of question. The sense of duty is something independent of any object of sensation, and often influences the mind in opposition to the lower desires. The mind possesses also in reflection a power of modifying, strengthening, or weakening the motives to which we are subject. This is a matter of fact which the most rigid fatalist may allow. It is even an essential doctrine of the system of Spinoza, who, though a complete necessitarian, admits that man can moderate his passions and desires by means of his intelligence. All must agree with him that man is free to this extent. In the words of Kant: "The will is free, because sensibility does not make its action necessary, but there dwells in man a faculty for determining himself independently of necessity through sensible impulses."[1]

Hence, though we may be unable to follow any motive to an absolute commencement, yet we can know for certain that, prior to action, it lies in the mind itself, and is attended, as it issues forth in action, by "a distinct and immediate personal consciousness of causation."[2] So that, without going beyond the self-evident consciousness, we may define the conscious will to be a movement from the subjective to the objective. It is the mind in its passage from thought to action. Its exertion is not merely a spontaneous movement of man's nature, of which he accidentally takes cognizance as it passes, but which would be just the same whether he noticed it or not. This would be the activity of a self-conscious magnet; but is not the whole power which obviously belongs to man, nor that which he calls Will. He is capable of motives, which are not merely subject to the observation of thought, but which depend upon thought for their existence, and arise from the intellectual faculty or moral judgment.

[1] Rein. Vern. p. 420. This he calls "*practical liberty*."

[2] Sir John Herschel, in Lardner's Cab., Astron., note to chap. vii.

16. But the prior question remains — whether, in any case, the motive arise wholly or partly from an absolute originating power of the mind, or be always determined by previous subtile causes, and these again by others to infinity. The action of the mind in thought may be itself only a link in the chain of necessity; and the supposed faculty of self-determination an illusion. Every motive, whether of sense or of reason, may be a natural compulsion, like the inclination of the needle to the north.

This is the doctrine of Spinoza, and he holds, consistently with it, that freedom, in the common sense of the word, is impossible. Hence an agent is called free who is not determined by external constraint. On this theory, freedom is not opposed to necessity, but signifies that particular kind of necessity in which the previous causes lie within the nature of the being or agent, and are not imposed from without.

If this doctrine can be established, freedom is at once a mere word, and atheism or pantheism the inevitable result. Whether the chain of necessity be wholly physical, or consist partly of moral causes, it seems impossible to escape this conclusion. However true it may be that the Great All (τὸ πᾶν) is free, it is manifest that the finite determination, man as man, is not free, but is constrained by influences prior and external to himself.

17. We must inquire, then, what we can know respecting the origin of the feelings, emotions, or dispositions, which are the mind's motives to action.

It must be admitted for certain that they are not wholly spontaneous and original, not altogether uncaused efforts of the mind. They depend partly on each man's natural constitution, partly on the influences of education and other past circumstances, partly on present affections of the sensibility. Two men are placed in similar circumstances, with the same choice between virtue and self-interest, and choose differently. Whence this difference? Is it in their natural dispositions? Partly, perhaps; although it is beyond question that natural dispositions may be changed for better or for worse. Is it in their education? It may be partly in this too; although here also it is credible, that the man of greater opportunities may have used them less. Many other circumstan-

ces may also have their influence, and are to be taken account of in matters of conduct. But is the whole difference to be traced to such causes? Can we be proved to be in error by those who affirm free-will to be illogical, if we assert it to be possible that, of the two men, he who has had the greatest defect of natural disposition, and the least opportunity of improvement through education, may sometimes prove more virtuous than the other? Such proof is impossible; for all must admit that the man of less opportunities may have used them more; and, by the force of exertion, the strength of will may have overcome the natural infirmity of temperament; while the other has suffered deterioration of character through the neglect of virtuous endeavor.

But the necessitarian will follow us closely, and will press us with the just question—What, after all, is this strength of will, but a part of the man's constitution from his birth? And it must be admitted that strength of will belongs by nature in different degrees to different individuals, and even to different races of mankind. Yet this admission does not yield the question. The necessitarian can not establish his case except by showing—not only that the power of exertion is a gift of nature, but that the whole act of exertion, in any particular case, is a necessary result of that power; not only that the mind can not originate any of its emotions, but also that it has no uncaused original power of giving intensity to them, or of repressing them; and that, if it does so, it is influenced, or rather constrained to this, by some other motive, some sense of right or wrong, some feeling of pleasure or pain, some appetency or aversion, wholly unoriginated by itself. He must be able too to make this assertion, not only of any particular action, but of a man's whole life. He must affirm that every deliberate choice is determined necessarily by previous causes; and that too, not only in the case of strong preponderating motives, but even in choosing between two which appear to be equally balanced.

18. We make this answer, then, to the fatalist, and it is the only answer *a priori* which the case admits, that he can not establish his theory without assumptions which beg the whole question in dispute. It is evident that we do not know enough of the inward

nature of the mind to be warranted in denying to it all power of controlling or giving intensity to its emotions by an original and uncaused effort; or, if there be, in every case, some occasion of the mind's motives, we can not descend deep enough into its essence, to see that it possesses no spontaneous power of giving or refusing its attention when such occasions arise; or if, according to some philosophers, its life be a continued Divine agency—or, according to the Christian doctrine, it have no power of virtuous action but through Divine influence—we can not so see it in its springs of action, as to know that it possesses no original faculty of employing and directing the derived power of thought and intelligence in such a way as to draw into itself an increased energy of being or will. It is possible that the derived life must, in the nature of things, immediately possess a power of uncaused resistance to the creative influence.

It manifestly overthrows a system of dogmatic fatalism, to admit any power of choice without an adequate cause; or any faculty of resisting a good motive or a good influence; or any ability to act without cause, in opening or shutting the flood-gates of the mind's activity, in lending or refusing attention to what is before it, in giving intensity to its emotions or in restraining them, in imbibing fresh waters from the Well of Life.

The question of freedom or necessity lies too deeply imbosomed in the constitution of the mind to be submitted to investigation, or decided on speculative grounds, with confident dogmatism. Logic is inapplicable to the problem. It lies deeper than logic. Instead of saying that the assertor of liberty is a bad logician, we ought to say that the denier of liberty is a bad philosopher.[1]

19. But all the difficulties of free-will are on the speculative ground. Practically every thing is in its favor. As far as the actions of the mind can be traced in consciousness, it is certain that it seems to have an original power by which it can give effect to the sense of right; can make an exertion to increase its intensity; can turn the attention by a sudden effort from one motive to another; choose between a conscientious motive and an opposing

[1] The early Christian writers strongly assert the doctrine of an originating power in man, *τὸ αὐτεξούσιον*.

impulse of sense, and often subject the will to the weaker motive instead of the stronger.

It is especially in moral action that the freedom of the will is discovered. We are obliged to admit it in practical questions, before we can consider ourselves responsible agents, or understand the law of conscience, or acknowledge the justice of rewards and punishments. The word *ought*[1] expresses a kind of relation which is not to be met with in physical nature, but only in the mind of man. The understanding can inquire only as to what is in nature, or has been, or will be. It can not inquire what *ought* to happen according to laws of nature, any more than what ought to be the properties of the circle.

This *ought* expresses something superior to all external impulses or inward feelings. There may be ever so many natural causes, or sensible impulses, which move the will; yet this ought prescribes to all of them their limit, and even forbids and directs them. It has no relation to the laws of the phenomenal world, but is the language of reason with reference to what is practical. Whether or no reason possesses an originating power, we have no means of ascertaining as a matter of science; but it is certain that the causality of the reason is not subject to the law of phenomena.

It is true that "no given action, since it can be perceived only as phenomenon, can begin absolutely of itself. But we can not say of the reason, that before that state wherein it determines the will, there precedes another state of the reason, which determines that state itself."[2] Hence, however certain it may be that all events and all actions, empirically considered, are determined in certain chains of causes and effects; this, however, is in no degree inconsistent with a causality from liberty, depending upon reason as the permanent but concealed condition of all the actions of the will.

Let us consider such an action; for instance, a malicious lie, by means of which a man has wrought confusion in society. If we seek the determining causes of this action, and consider how far the man is justly responsible, we may take account of the forma-

[1] The following passage is founded on some parts of Kant's chapter on Freedom in the Pure Reason.

[2] Kant, ubi s. p. 433.

tion of his character through bad education, evil company, partly also from the malignancy of a natural disposition insensible to shame; partly we ascribe it to levity and thoughtlessness; and we must not overlook the occasioning causes of opportunity. In all these we proceed, as we do generally in investigating the determining causes for a given natural effect. But although we should believe the action to be determined by these causes, we nevertheless blame the agent; and that not on account of his unfortunate natural disposition, not on account of influencing circumstances, nor yet on account of his previously immoral life;[1] on the contrary, we take it for granted that he could have overcome his natural disposition, and could have set aside all previous conditions; and we regard this act as if it were independent of them, and as if the agent commenced in it a series of consequences wholly of himself. It is, in fact, an instinctive principle of judgment, to regard the man as possessing, in his reason, a faculty which could and ought to have otherwise determined his conduct, irrespective of all the empirical conditions.

20. We conclude, then, that on speculative grounds it is impossible to establish a theory of either freedom or necessity; but that, on practical grounds, there are reasons of the strongest kind for believing that man is really free and able to originate from himself. The question has been already indicated whether pantheism be not the only alternative, and whether the denial of all original mental power do not make the Creator the Author of evil. What this freedom is, how it arises, in what it consists, are questions beyond the province of the faculties. And no wonder. For the question must extend to the depths of the soul's life, and its dependence upon the Author of its being. The Christian may regard it as a faculty communicated, for wise ends, by the Creator: one feature of that Divine Image in which man was created. For moral responsibility it need be no more than a power of resisting the Divine influence, or refusing the gift of Divine life. It

[1] But previous bad life may have worn out the power of reason which should have directed him. To make a man responsible, it is not necessary that he have liberty during his whole life, and be incapable of depriving himself of it.

is certainly no arbitrary power, which may be laid aside and resumed at pleasure. Though the will be unconditioned in its origin, it becomes conditioned in all the results of its action. It can not be misdirected with impunity. Beyond question, a man may become the slave of evil habits. Beyond question, the effects may be irremediable, except through a renewed energy from the Source of Life; when once the will of the creature has been turned against the will of the Creator.

CHAPTER IV.

EVIDENCE OF AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE INFINITE BEING IN THE LIMITING CONDITIONS OF ALL KNOWLEDGE.

1. Immensity of Nature.—2. Rational Theology.—3. Kant's Antinomy.—4. *Why now?* An objection to Atheism.—5. The incomprehensible Being.—6. Is One and Infinite.

1. VAIN would be all the efforts of human thought, if, to pass from nature up to nature's God, it were necessary to pass through all the phenomena, and all the chains of causes, both discovered and concealed; to trace the design and providence of the Creator through all the processes of creation, and so, by displaying its wonderful unities, at length, after a long and patient journey, to arrive at the point of dependence. There would then be force in the objection of atheism—"In the presence of so many mysteries and marvels, which art or science can not unravel, which philosophy can not explain, it seems to me an immense endowment, when a man can say with confidence—I look through nature and beyond nature up to nature's God. The presumption of the thing repels me."[1] "We are very far from the time," says Humboldt, "even supposing it possible that it should ever arrive, when a reasonable hope could be conceived of reducing all that is perceived by the senses to the unity of a single principle."[2]

The case were indeed hopeless, if this were the only course to reach the foundation of natural theology. Geology and astronomy discover the extent, in time and space, of the field to be traversed;

[1] Mr. Holyoake speaks to this effect in controversy with Mr. Townley, p. 23.

[2] Sabine's Transl., vol. i. p. 62.

and man might well sit down in hopeless despondence before the impossible task.

Geology has proved beyond question, that the world has not always existed under its present form; but has gone through many changes and revolutions, during periods of inconceivable duration. Nor can we discover the commencement of the records graven in the rocks. They go back beyond the reach of observation.

Again, with reference to the extent of the universe, Astronomy has opened out sublime views of its vastness in space. It has enlarged our knowledge of the solar system, and discovered it to be but a speck in the stellar universe of the milky way. Starting with the earth's radius for its base, in measurements of the solar system, it is obliged, for the stellar distances, to enlarge it to the diameter of the annual orbit; yet finds the immense distance of two hundred millions of miles to be all but inappreciable from the *nearest* fixed star. For the more remote stars a yet larger unit of measure becomes necessary, to bring them within reach of our arithmetic. Some of them are found to be so distant, that the light by which we see them must have occupied even thousands of years in its transmission. And yet light travels from the moon to the earth in a second and a quarter of time.

So innumerable are the bright orbs of space, that the whole of the milky way is like a vast shore of luminous sand, and, except to the best telescopes, an irresolvable mass of shining dust. Yet this is not all. This milky way, this stellar universe of ours, is but one of many. Others not less vast, it is probable, than our own, lie at immeasurable distances beyond it; and are seen by us as faint or cloudy nebulæ, which appear, when highly magnified, to be masses of distinct stars.[1]

Geology and astronomy have made marvelous revelations respecting the existence of the universe in time and space. But no science has been able to penetrate far into the depths of existence in its reality. We can trace indeed the dependence of cause upon

[1] This passage does not appear to be inconsistent with any thing which has been advanced by "The Plurality of Worlds." It would be unwarrantable to assume that all the nebulæ are systems of suns. That none are remains to be proved.

cause, often from the simple phenomena of inert matter, to those long hidden and subtile agents, which play so important a part in the physical world. But a few steps are always sufficient to carry us to the borders of the unknown.

2. But to be assured that there is a Supreme Being, needs no such knowledge of the universe as a whole. A proof from the principles of reason, has not to search the store-house of universal nature. It has in itself a universal knowledge of external nature, *in the conditions which must be fulfilled by every existing thing, before it can be known at all as an object of experience*—conditions not merely subjective, but fulfilled by the external object itself. It must be our next purpose, to consider the limiting conditions of our knowledge of the objective world.

Questions of this kind meet with little favor in this country at the present time. They are attended with difficulty, and have led to different conclusions. Hence the common feeling that all such reasonings are fallacious. But the boast of the age to be guided by practical wisdom and common sense, its contempt for the niceties of speculation, often mean no more than—we will avoid all troublesome thought, unless it promise material gain. Certain it is that with our practical wisdom, and contempt of philosophy, we are now brought to that pass, that systems of atheism and natural deism, founded on assumptions of false philosophy, have been gaining ground against religion; and the popular answer to them is little better, than that metaphysics are dangerous, and reason an untrustworthy guide. We are therefore to believe as our fathers did, whether we can give any account of our belief or no. Unfortunately the same advice may be given to Hindoos and Mohammedans, and ought to have as much weight with them as with us.

It may be observed, however, that the arguments of other chapters in this work, are not dependent upon those of the present chapter. They will stand on their own merits, whatever be the result of our present inquiry.

The limiting conditions of knowledge may be briefly represented in the following proposition:

PROP.—*Every object of possible experience must have originated in a Being superior to all conditions of time, space, and causality.*

The truth of this proposition depends upon the impossibility of a completed infinity, whether of time, space, or number. Every object of possible experience can be known only as in time, in space, and in causal dependence.

(1.) First, with reference to causal dependence. We are compelled to regard every object of experience as dependent upon a prior cause. The prior cause may often be known; as, for instance, when we trace the sensations of color to the luminiferous ether; and the dependence may sometimes be traced through several steps. But the chain of causes can never be of infinite length. We see and know but the surface of existence; we may conjecture that the Source of being—the Absolute—lies at some depth beneath, but may know for certain, that the depth *to* this Source is not infinite. There is and must be an Absolute, in which the phenomenal has its cause and origin, but which is not itself in dependence upon a superior cause.

That each present appearance is dependent upon an infinite chain of present causes would generally be considered improbable. But the question of its *possibility* is commonly regarded as beyond comprehension. But this is not the case. An infinite chain is not merely incomprehensible; it is impossible. Every link of the chain is an additional step within the sphere of knowledge, and we have here no right to speak of any thing as incomprehensible. Number is perfectly intelligible, and it is easy to see that there can be no such thing as an infinite number. It is essentially finite and can never become infinite by addition. A completed infinity is not only inconceivable; it is impossible.

There is, then, a present source of reality to both mind and matter. So far as they can be known, their existence is dependent and conditioned. But the dependent must rest upon the independent, the conditioned upon the unconditioned.

(2.) Suppose, then, either mind, or matter, or both, to have independence within itself: our next step is to show, that its existence must either have had a commencement in time, or must be it-

self free from all conditions of time, and superior to them. It must either exist out of time—however incomprehensible the assertion—or it must have had a commencement in time, from a Being who does thus exist absolutely. Such we shall find to be the unavoidable inference of the common principles of human knowledge, respecting their origin beyond the field of possible experience.

This part of the question will apply equally to space.

The proof of this assertion depends on the impossibility of an elapsed eternity. Common reason revolts from the conception, as something not merely inconceivable, but impossible. We can conceive an eternity to come, because we do not need to regard it as complete, which it never can be. And so, in past time, we may go farther and farther back in imagination, but a completed eternal duration is as impossible in the past as in the future. It is often said, on the other hand, that we can not conceive past duration as limited at any particular point, any more than infinite; for whatever distant epoch we may take, still another must have preceded it. Hence the question is commonly regarded as one of opposite incomprehensibles. But they are not equally incomprehensible, nor in the same sense, when the question is considered with reference, not merely to abstract time, but to something existing in time. It is true that time can no more be limited by the mind than conceived infinite. Both hypotheses are not merely incomprehensible but absurd. But atheism assumes one of the absurdities to be true: theism avoids them both. To affirm the world to have existed eternally as it is, is to affirm that an eternity has elapsed, which is impossible. To affirm that the world had a beginning in time, still leaves the mind at liberty to range in imaginary periods before it, though it can never reach infinity. And reason is made self-consistent by the unavoidable inference, that time itself is dependent upon a Being superior to its conditions of duration. Hence whatever exists under conditions of time, that is, every object of possible experience, must have had a commencement from a Being superior to these conditions.

3. The importance of these questions, and the unsettled state of opinion concerning them, renders it necessary to make some additional remarks.

The prevalent opinion is that of Kant. His Critique professed to remove the question altogether from the sphere of human knowledge. He gives proofs and counter-proofs that the world is both limited and unlimited, and maintains them to be equally cogent on either side. "Of the valiant knights," he says, "in this dialectical arena, whoever makes the last attack, is sure to carry off the crown of victory."

But is it possible or not to define the limits and principles of knowledge? If not, what was the use of his Critique? If it be, it must surely be impossible, by means of these principles, to demonstrate contradictories. Either it must be possible to see at what point, of one or both demonstrations, we extend our principles beyond their legitimate use; or else their application must, on one side or on the other, fail to establish the result; unless at the cost of inconsistency with themselves, that is, of evident absurdity.

If we examine the arguments of Kant on the question of the world-commencement,[1] we find that he rests the proof of his thesis—"The world has a commencement in time," upon the impossibility of an elapsed eternity. He admits the proof to be irrefutable, but professes to overthrow its force by his antithesis—"The world has no commencement," of which he professes to give an equally cogent demonstration.

But the proof of the antithesis rests upon the assumption, that "no origin of any thing is possible in void time, because no part of such time has, above any other, any distinctive condition in itself to educe entity from nonentity."[2] This proof may here be seen to be pressed beyond the limits of human reason. The assumption is similar to that which the atheist brings against creation—"There is no reason why it should take place at one particular time rather than another." But it has no force. Its value is fictitious, because it is an affirmation of what is *beyond* the limits of possible knowledge.

Time out of the world, and prior to its origin, is not what it is subsequently to it. Time is not the same thing with the Creator as

[1] First Antinomy, Rein. Vern. p. 338.

[2] "Eine unterscheidende Bedingung des Daseyns, für die des Nichtseyns."

n the world. Human periods of duration are measured by phenomena of the world. They possess comparative magnitude, and it is with reference to our human standard, that we speak of the world as created at this or that epoch, prior to the present. The questions respecting commencement—"Why here?" "Why now?" have meaning when they are made from our human point of view: they apply therefore to all atheistic theories, which make the universe an infinite number of such points of view, and are questions which can not be evaded on such schemes. But to have meaning in their application to theism, they must be asked from a very different point of view—from that of the Creator Himself; which no speculator can ever reach, since we can not understand the relations of space and time to the Absolute Infinity and Eternity of God.

Hence if we regard the world-commencement as dependent upon the Infinite Being, the argument for the antithesis of Kant—"The world has no commencement"—is found to fail.

4. This result is no less certain than it is curious. It turns out that the old objections which the atheist has been so fond of alleging against theism, are impotent except against his own theories; where they have their full force, and can not be answered. It is time the world were done at length with the questions—"Was there ever a time when the God over all was God over nothing?" and "Why did He create at this time rather than another?"[1] Such questions are strangely inconsistent from a materialist, who tells us matter is eternal, and mind a product, evolved from it at this particular time, rather than in the geological ages past, and all the chaotic periods of the reign of chance which went before them. For how can matter, if it be eternal, accomplish that at this particular time, which it has not accomplished in a past eternity? Can advancing years add any thing to what is already

[1] To the question—"Antequam mundum faceret Deus quid agebat?" Irenæus answers—"Dicimus quoniam ista responsio subjacet Deo." (Adv. Hær. ii. 47.) A more satisfactory answer than Origen's—"Nobis autem placet, et ante hunc mundum alium fuisse mundum, et post illum alium futurum." (De Princ. iii. v. 3.) Augustin discusses the question, Confess. xi. 12–30, and the purport of his answer is—"Videant nullum tempus esse posse sine creatura . . . . et intelligant Te ante omnia tempora Æternum Creatorem omnium temporum."

eternal? How, then, should more time be wanted for the evolutions and developments which are yet to arise from the self-existing matter; whether we, the miserable victims of time, shall live to see them or not? Matter is generally considered inert and sluggish, but this is a marvelous property of its sluggishness to discover that, after an eternity of being, it should want a few more years to produce the mind of an atheist! Surely in an eternity past, it must have completed all the evolutions through which it can advance in the eternity to come; nay, it must have done this eternal ages ago: it must have been eternally perfect and without change.

The atheist wields a weapon in this argument which is powerless, except against himself. His theory is confuted by the common principles of all knowledge, and that too on the very point which it thought to be the weakness of theism, but which theism alone is able to defend.

5. The question must not be overlooked—What do we mean by a Being superior to relations of time? Without doubt the conception can have but a negative value. We may say that He is a Being who does not *endure*, but *is;* but this can mean no more than that His existence is such, that it can not possibly fall under the conditions of human experience. We mean that a Being exists, the manner of whose existence can not be included within the limits of human knowledge. To deny the possibility of such a Being is to make our faculties the measure of all possibility. Thus the principles of reason, on which man is dependent for his most elementary knowledges of himself and of an external world, demonstrate the existence of an incomprehensible Being.

But what do we gain, the atheist will demand, by this notion of an Incomprehensible? We gain this; that besides finding a basis for the other arguments of theism, we avoid the *absurdity* which lies on the opposite side of the question. And this is our only possible escape. In the indefinite extension of time every thing is comprehensible. Duration is a perfectly intelligible notion: we can conceive it to be extended without limit, and can see it to be impossible that it can ever complete an eternity.

The question of the origin of nature is one which we can not possibly evade. It forces itself upon the reason, and presently in-

volves it in a dilemma. But it is not, as is commonly thought, a dilemma of opposite incomprehensibles, but between an incomprehensible and an absurdity; between a conclusion above reason and one contrary to it. We can not but shrink from the absurdity, the incomprehensibility is no more than was to be expected.

6. We gain yet more. When the finite is excluded, we are led of necessity to the Infinite, and obtain by this means the only quite strict proof we have of the Divine Unity. Such a proof might be open to question if it stood alone; and the conception of the Infinite pronounced a mere ideal, because it is no more than negative. But these inferences from the principles of knowledge must be connected with the results of observation. External nature furnishes abundant evidences of the Divine Unity, though they may not repress the madness of skepticism. And the manifestations of immense power, wisdom, and goodness in nature give a positive signification to the conception of the Infinite. The First Cause is seen in nature to be above us and beneath us; to extend His influence and His agency far beyond the penetration of the senses. He is thus discovered to be Infinite, or to possess that immensity which to man is practically the same thing. Yet the absolute conception can not, in the nature of things, have come from observation alone, because the finite can never reach the Infinite. The mind is carried by observation to a power beyond the greatest extension of the powers of nature, and so far its knowledge is positive. It then completes the conception of the Infinite from itself. This is often called an innate, and is without doubt a natural conception. It is the natural foundation of the common principles of knowledge. It is a product of the spontaneous action of the mind in its relations with the world, and may be confirmed and established as in the preceding investigation.

In like manner this absolute Infinity of a Being superior to relations of time, space, and causality, furnishes the only strict proof of the Divine Unity. The evidence of nature is sufficient, for in its extent and variety it is as illimitable as space and time. But by means of the principles of reason it becomes conclusive in the strictest sense. Absolute infinity is all-embracing. Superiority to relations of space and time exclude the notion of plurality.

Thus human knowledge is found incompetent, by its own principles, to include within its sphere all possible or all real existence. Reason must admit that there is ONE GOD, INFINITE IN NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES.

CHAPTER V.

A PRIORI PROOFS.

1. The Ontological Proof.—2. The Psychological Proof.—3. The Cosmological Proof.—4. Critique of these Proofs.—5. Kant's Theological Idea.—6. Only one Proof.—7. Method of Theism.

WE may now endeavor to understand and estimate the force of arguments commonly called *a priori:* the *ontological*, the *psychological*, and the *cosmological* proofs of the existence of God.

1. *The ontological proof*[1] infers the existence of the Supreme Being from the idea of the most perfect Being which is formed by the mind. The mind perceives as clearly and distinctly that necessary existence must be included in this conception, as that the idea of a triangle includes the equality of its angles to two right angles, or the idea of a mountain carries along with it that of a valley. The idea of a mountain of marble implies possible existence; that of a mountain without a valley impossible existence; that of an All-perfect Being necessary existence. Thus the existence of the Supreme Being is concluded from the *content* of the notion formed by the mind.

2. *The psychological proof*[2] draws its inference from the *fact* that we possess the conception of the Infinite, Eternal, All-perfect Being; not from the internal content of the conception as involving necessary existence. Our possession of such a notion must be ascribed, it is argued, to an adequate cause: no such cause is to be found in the self or in the world: it can not have come from the finite. It therefore requires God for its Cause, and consequently He exists.

[1] Des Cartes, Med. v.; also Malebranche, Recherche, iv. xi. ii.; Spinoza, Princ. Phil. Cart. Pars i.; Leibnitz, Op. p. 177, 374; Kant, Rein. Vern. This proof is ascribed to Anselm.

[2] Des Cartes, Méthode iv.; Med. iii. Spinoza, ubi s. Leibnitz, p. 374, *Nouv. Ess.* iv. x. 8.

3. *The cosmological proof*[1] is different from either of the preceding. It starts from the evident fact that something exists; and infers from this that an absolutely necessary Being exists. So far it can scarcely in any sense be called *a priori*. But having thus concluded the existence of a self-dependent Being, whose Nature, however, remains unknown, it goes on to inquire upon this point, that it may not leave us with an empty notion. But here, where it might be expected, even more than in the former part, to look toward the objective, it flies back to the subjective circle, which, in its previous step, it had left behind. It pretends to complete the proof by means of conceptions. It finds that the mind has the notion of a Most Real Being, that is, of One who, as the Source of all existence, contains all reality within His own Essence; and that this conception, and this alone, involves the conception of absolute necessity of being. It concludes, therefore, that this all-real Being is the self-dependent Being of whom it was in search.

4. The first of these proofs—the ontological—depends wholly on the Cartesian assumption, that we are to effect the passage from subjective thought to objective being, by means of the principle—that a clear and distinct idea is representative of real truth. The argument is discussed by Kant at some length; but, in point of fact, his objections amount to this, that no mental conception of a thing can carry along with it the certainty that the thing actually exists without the mind. In short, to use his own illustration, it is much the same kind of argument as if, from the clear conception of a hundred pounds, one were to infer that he actually possessed the money. He considers the proof to fail, because it does not make good the passage from the facts of thought to outward and real existence.

Kant's opinion appears to agree with that of Aquinas and the schoolmen, who are said by Leibnitz to have regarded the proof as a paralogism. Leibnitz himself treats it more respectfully; considering it as in strictness imperfect, but capable of a more exact statement; and, at all events, morally conclusive, according to man's present faculties.

The cosmological proof professes to supply what is wanting to

[1] Kant, Rein. Vern.

the ontological in this respect. It appeals to experience for the evidence that there must be a necessarily existing Being; but having done this, in its attempt to ascertain His Nature, it immediately falls into the error of the former. Its first inference is unexceptionable. It declines the short method of deducing the existence of the First Being from conceptions; and yet it relies on conceptions for its whole knowledge of His Nature.

The objection to it may perhaps be briefly stated. Granted that the conception A implies the conception B, and that A exists, yet it does not follow that the existence A implies the existence B. We must first know that the relations of mental notions are correspondent to the relations of real things: which we can no more assume to be the case, than we can assume, as in the ontological proof, that the notions themselves necessarily correspond to outward realities.

The psychological proof appears, at first sight, to promise a more satisfactory issue. It starts from the fact that man is able to form the conception of a Supreme Being. Every cultivated and fully-developed mind has the idea of God, All-perfect and Infinite. Without it, all proof and all knowledge of His Being would be impossible. Man could neither form the proof, nor attach a meaning to it, if it were presented to his mind.

Whence does this mental conception take its rise? The Cartesian demonstration assigns it to God for its cause; and we have seen in former chapters that the argument is good. But the question is not, whether it be true; but whether, when it is thus briefly stated, it is evident and unavoidable. Suppose the atheist demand how he is to know that the idea is assigned to its true cause: suppose he affirm, with Kant, that it is produced by the subjective principles of the mind, and has no warrant for its objective validity; what answer can be made to this objection?

5. Yet it can not but appear that there is something improbable and unsatisfactory in Kant's discussion of these proofs. If the idea of the Supreme Being, given by the Pure Reason, were without confirmation from other sources, we might think it to be founded upon nothing but the unwarranted extension, beyond the field of experience, of those principles of judgment which are nec-

essary to us within this field; and might be satisfied to regard it as a mere regulative principle, which restrains and directs the understanding in its empirical application. Yet, even in this case, it would appear an unwarrantable account of the theological idea, to say that the pure reason leads naturally and necessarily to internal representations, which are outwardly unmeaning and illusive. For why should it be necessary to our comprehension of the finite, that reason should claim to place us in connection with the Infinite? And the question would arise—Since, in experience, the conception of cause is inseparable from that of an outward world; whence comes it that we so naturally and unavoidably give an objective signification to our conception of a First and Necessary Cause? But if, besides, we have other evidences of the Divine Existence, in the moral nature of man and in revelation, it becomes still more improbable—as it is inconsistent with the constant adaptation of means to ends which we discover in the world—that these innate principles of the understanding necessarily conduct us to certain conceptions of a First Cause, which, however, are to be set aside by the reflective mind as devoid of real meaning and validity.

If we allow no knowledge to be certain beyond the subjective conceptions, then, no doubt, the ideal of theology must be included among them; and the Supreme Being discovered to us by reason is but an empty mental notion. But if the spontaneous thought discover the existence of an external world distinct from ourselves, it may also furnish a true testimony to the existence of God. Reflection may be expected to verify the one deliverance of the reason as well as the other. At all events, where the claim is so decided, and its assertion so unavoidable, it can not be summarily rejected as an illusion. Reason is bound to examine it, and to account for it; to inquire into the foundation of its pretensions, and see whether they can be established by sufficient evidence, and on the safe principles of judgment, which give us our common knowledge of the world. It is in this inquiry that we find we have as good and credible evidence of the Being of God as of any other truth external to the mind itself.

The important step, it is evident, is the passage from the sub-

jective to the objective, from thought to being. Till this step has been taken, we can have no demonstration of His Being but what gives us the subjective ideal of Kant, or the intellectual notion of Spinoza. We have no proof from reason of a Real Being, unless reason have a means of issuing forth beyond itself. But the affirmation that the world exists—a truth as certain as any which can be known—implies that this passage has been effected. The principle of causality which gave the outlet to the world, finds in the world and in itself the foundation of all knowledge of God.

6. We can not argue briefly with Des Cartes, that the idea of God requires God for its cause, and therefore He exists. Without doubt He is the Cause of the idea; but this truth needs to be established on common principles of knowledge. The means of doing this have been partly set forth in our previous investigations. The knowledge of God, like that of the world, is gained spontaneously. The reason can see, however, when it observes reflectively, that as each single sensation requires an outward cause, so the unity of the outward world requires a Cause of all causes; and farther, that as all empirical knowledge is founded on ascertainable principles, so these principles carry the mind, whether it will or no, to believe in a Being transcendent to their possible application.

We thus arrive at the conclusion that, instead of several proofs of the existence of God, *only one proof is possible*, of which the different so-called proofs are portions. The whole proof consists in the *exhibition of the process by which the mind gains possession of the idea*. This process rests in primary experience and in nature. The idea of God, like that of the self or of the world, is a natural product of the mind, in the course of its development by its intercourse with the world. It springs up from the Source of being. It grows of itself. It becomes ours, we know not how till we have gained it; but we are then able to look back, and to trace the course by which it arose.

In doing this, we can see that the principles of empirical knowledge declare their own insufficiency, and so point distinctly to a Being beyond their reach. They carry us, whether we will or no, to the conception of the Infinite. The cosmological proof states the procedure of the mind, in giving its first mat-

ter to this empty conception; and raises it to the positive conception of the source of all being and power. It is where this proof ends that the physico-theological proof, or argument from design, has its commencement. The cosmological, when properly stated,[1] infers a Cause of causes, a Source of all reality, from the knowledge of the world as a unity of diversities. The physico-theological examines the nature of these diversities; and from their harmony, their beauty, their marvelous adaptations to ends, in the Order of the material, the intellectual, and the moral worlds, draws its conclusions respecting the Nature and Attributes of that Eternal Power, who is the Source of all being. It discovers Him to be Living and Intelligent; to be Wise, and Holy, and Good.

The psychological proof is a statement of the whole result of the process in the mind, and the ascription of the resulting idea to an adequate Cause, without tracing it through the several steps by which it arises.

7. The Divine Nature of the Most Highest is indivisible unity. His attributes are inseparable in themselves; and to a mind which has not been initiated in the difficulties of skepticism all nature declares, with the unanimous voice of ten thousand tongues, THERE IS ONE GOD, THE FATHER OF ALL.

But in examining the evidences of this truth, and inquiring whether this voice be credible, we become aware of the wide difference which exists between truth as it is in itself, and truth as it becomes known to the mind of man. We are obliged to resolve one truth into several propositions; to take partial views, and to establish by distinct arguments what has already come to us as a whole.

The method of theism is therefore humble, and such as becomes man on such a subject. Pretending to no geometrical proofs, it finds that evidences of a different kind have complete certainty to convince man of the existence of beings like himself. Habit has taught him to infer the existence of another from certain general appearances which are constant. He needs many additional observations, and long experience of words and deeds, before he can add to his knowledge of a man's existence that of his character and

[1] As it is by Locke, Essay, Book iv. c. x. § 3 and 4.

disposition. He may well be content with the same kind of evidence of the Nature and Attributes of God. He can not deduce all his knowledge from some single conception, such as that of the Self-existent Being, or the All-real Being; for this were to comprehend the Divine Nature within the limits of the mind. It is probable that God may so reveal Himself to His creatures, and thus communicate a true, though imperfect conception of His Nature. But to found a demonstration on conceptions, we must first have traced the processes of creation from their commencement to the evolution of the mind, and the generation of its unavoidable ideas.

This, however, were an impossible task. Man must be content with humbler methods of knowledge. He must test his results by the common and allowed principles of all judgment. He must inquire whether they are corroborated by the various facts of consciousness, in all the diversified manifestations of man and of the world.

This, then, is our method of procedure; and thus far it has been carried out, though imperfectly and unworthily of the subject. Deeper and more accurate thought will be able to establish the conclusion on an immovable basis; that although we can make no pretension to demonstrations of deductive logic or geometry; although we must acknowledge such pretension to be an assumption of equality with God, and the demand for such a proof equivalent to an assertion that we will not believe in God, because we are not gods ourselves; although the evidences of natural theology must be collected with labor and attention, and must be examined in the conviction that we are infinitely little, in comparison of Him whom we seek; yet we have, in ourselves and in the world around us; in bare material existence and in the abiding laws of the universe; in its order and stability, its designs, its adaptations to ourselves—and these, not only in its more palpable manifestations of fitness, but in those deeper adaptations which make it a world of possible perception to the mind; in the vast abysses of astronomy, illimitable, yet full of harmony; in the immeasurable periods of geology, often broken by catastrophes, yet ever evolving new forms of

being and higher manifestations of life; in all the processes of nature, whether of material or of vital existence; in the powers which excite, and in the powers which restrain, the pestilence and the tempest; in the forces which bind together the universe, and shut up the sea within its bounds; in those which give life and beauty to the snow-drop, and in those which have hung the earth upon nothing, and strewn its firmament with the golden dust of suns; in man, individually and socially; in the ideas of reason and in the instincts of feeling; in the law of conscience and in the aspirations of the soul; in the mystery of evil, with its moral retributions in ourselves and in history: we have in all, evidences, less palpable indeed than the first appearances of sensation, but not on this account less easy and natural to the mind—evidences sufficient, according to the common principles of reason, to give us as cogent a proof of the existence, a far more full and complete demonstration of the Attributes of the MOST HIGHEST, than we can ever gain of the existence and character of any one person like ourselves.

CHAPTER VI.

GOD IS A SPIRIT.

1. A living Spirit.

1. QUIET submission to the inevitable is the highest virtue of materialism. The dead, unconscious matter; the unfeeling, unintelligent energy of nature is the only enduring being. It survives from age to age; it has possessed an eternity elapsed, and is secure of an eternity to come. Nothing can annihilate nor diminish it. It changes through its own inherent properties, and, as it changes, it spreads out in every age new forms of sublimity, new pictures of beauty and design; but it never perceives nor enjoys them. It gives birth to ephemeral creatures possessing wonderful powers of perception, intelligence, and feeling, who are able to appreciate the magnificence of nature, and are stirred by their inborn emotions, to worship One whom they regard as the Lord of nature, and the Author of their own being.

But these feelings are delusions. There is none greater than the dead, eternal matter, which can not change its fated laws. The past eternity was not theirs; and they have no more interest in the future. A blind and foolish fate gives them the few years of the present—long enough to awaken curiosity, and to fan to life the desire and the hope of immortality; but there is no Being superior to nature who can pity them or sympathize with the cares and disappointments of their useless and purposeless existence.

Fair is the face of nature; fair the features of loveliness to their eyes; thrilling to their ears are the generous accents of truth, and goodness, and self-devotion. But all is vanity. There is no soul in nature, nor in themselves. Nothing is but what can be seen or heard; and the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing.

When the atheist reflects on the desolate condition of nature's best and noblest work—man, it may well be the wish of his heart —Oh, that this nature were alive! Oh, that the powers which have spread abroad the heavens in their sublimity, and have given verdure and beauty to the landscape, and delicate penciling to the flower, and exquisite sensibility to the heart, were the energy of a living being like myself! Oh, that the Giver of life could know the soul's sorrows and desires, and listen to its supplications! Better that there were life in the forces which imparted its fury to the tempest of ocean and of air, and heaved up the terrific Alpine crags, and left them to hang in the rugged majesty which appalls, than that all nature should be dead. It were better to be the creature of a malignant demon, and to be born and perish in its caprice; for its intelligence might lead it hereafter to see the idle folly of its vain work in creation and destruction; and so there might be hope for future beings, if not for one's self; better this than to be the air-bubble of the iron wind of fate, to be tossed unwilling into an anxious life, and to pass as suddenly into nothing.

The answer of theism is that which gives rest and satisfaction to the soul. Theism sees in nature the operation of the Infinite and Good Spirit; and reads His language in His works. It perceives Wisdom and Goodness in creation, directing the Agency of unlimited Power, where to atheism there was nothing but dead

matter, and a blind, unconscious energy. It gains in the feelings of the soul the knowledge of His paternal care, and the assurance of His lasting protection and love.

It is our inquiry—Can we know this answer to be true? The cosmological proof of the existence of God has given us a First Cause of all reality: is that First Cause a living God? Is the Author of intelligence Himself intelligent? "He that giveth man understanding," can man know that He understands all things which are or can be?

The answer to this question depends chiefly on the *argument from design*. The cosmological argument gives us a First Cause of all things, an origin of all the latent causes of living mind; but it can not assure us that He is Himself Mind or Spirit, till we observe what are the particular powers and properties of this living mind, and what are the particular forms and adaptations of external nature. The physico-theological or design argument is founded on particular observations and examinations of nature, by which it discovers the meaning of what, in the cosmological, is expressed by the abstract term—*all reality;* and proves the First Cause to be a living, intelligent, and good Being. It demonstrates that the essential properties of mind—intelligence and will, can be correctly affirmed of the Divine Attributes: that whatever be the unknown mysteries of His Nature, the Supreme Being is One who acts with intelligent purpose, and according to the motives of a perfect Moral Will.

SECTION I.

THE DESIGN ARGUMENT.

2. Its Province.—3. Not an analogical Argument.—Instance of Analogy.—4. Critique of the Argument.—5. Like Effects have like Causes.—6. Extent of the Inference.—7. Hume's "Unique."—8. Knowledge of human Designers.—9. Supposed *reductio ad absurdum*.—10. Answer. Deny the Conclusion.—11. Deny the Premises.—12. M. Comte's "Positive Philosophy."

2. It is a leading effort of modern atheism to discredit the argument from design. Even theists are sometimes reluctant in

pressing it to its legitimate conclusions. This timidity, when it occurs, is probably due to the philosophy of Kant. It could not but *appear* unfavorable to theology that his great work concluded with chapters on "the impossibility of the ontological, the cosmological, and the physico-theological proofs of the Being of God." Atheists, though they overlooked the fatal results of his philosophy to every system of unbelief, were sure to make the most of the admission; and it was easier to affirm his conclusions in their most unqualified sense, than to examine his principles and arguments, and ascertain their real meaning and purport.

But it was far from Kant's intention to set aside the proof as useless. He admits it to be reasonable and useful; not only popular, but, *within its proper limits*, conclusive. His purpose was to restrain an over-dogmatical use of it, which made it a complete demonstration of the whole theological doctrine.

We have observed in what respects it is incompetent. Strictly speaking it gives a wise architect of the world rather than a Creator. It may be carried, however, in some of its branches, if not to prove the absolute creation of all things out of nothing, yet to prove the creation of every thing that can be known as material by the human mind. And although it can not alone demonstrate the Being of One Infinite, Eternal God; yet it is a very important inquiry, whether it may not possess exact certainty in its own department; and, as it is the most easy and popular of all proofs to mankind in general, whether it be not strictly sufficient for the conclusion, which it furnishes alike to the unlearned and to the learned—a conclusion implying all it can be necessary for man to know—that the world is ordered by a Living Mind, and subject to the dominion of a Lord and Governor, most powerful, wise, and good.

Such is the inference of reason from the innumerable designs of the universe, manifest even to the uninstructed eye, but extending beyond all penetration into the deep recesses of nature; and, many of them, not brought to light, but through long and patient labor, and the subtile researches of science. Every advancement of knowledge discovers some new design of creation, fulfilled perhaps by secret agents, and in intricate processes of nature; some design

long hidden from man, but always accomplished in the silent laboratory of the Creator, from the beginning of the world, and essential, it may be, to its continuance.

3. It is the argument of natural theology that design must imply a designer, and that that which designs is mind. We are to examine the legitimacy of this inference: and first, to show that it is not a mere argument from analogy; not, as it is sometimes represented, a case of probable reasoning, but a strict and unavoidable interpretation of plain facts, on the common principles of judgment. We shall find it to rest on the simplest and clearest application of that causal principle, on which all knowledge is dependent. Its conclusion carries along with it the strict certainty of causal necessity, and gives us a knowledge of existence, as certain and as trustworthy as any we can possess beyond our own consciousness.

If we can imagine it possible that man had possessed the powers of intelligence and will, but had been unable to combine them in intelligent action or design, it would, in such a case, have been impossible for him to gain the conception of design. Mind would then have been known to him, as the living power which perceives the varied phenomena of nature, and is able to originate motion, but not as capable of combination and contrivance. In this case, then, it would have been only *by analogy* and *with probability* that he could have ascribed intelligence to the originator of the powers which he perceives in nature. He would have passed, with perfect assurance, from the knowledge of power in himself to that of power without himself; and would have asked with reason—"Is it probable that man alone, the creature of yesterday, whose power is so limited, and his existence so transitory—is it probable that he alone can look on this magnificent universe, and be stirred to admiration by the changing beauties of the earth, and the unchanging sublimities of the skies? Can a world so varied and so vast have no intelligent inhabitant but one so feeble and short-sighted? The wonders of nature far exceed his powers of research or comprehension. It runs into mystery, in its commencement and in its destiny; in its vastness and in its minuteness; in things too immense for the mind, and in things too small for the senses; above

me and below me, within myself and without: is there no intelligence which can understand what reaches so far beyond human penetration; no mind which can trace back the hidden processes of nature to their origin, and read all the mysteries of being?"

There would have been much force in such a question, and the answer that man is not the only intelligent being, nor the first in intelligence, would have had a high probability in its favor. But it would have been an analogical argument, and would not have possessed absolute certainty. It might have been maintained that since the mind of man, the only known origin of power, possesses intelligence along with power, therefore it is highly probable from analogy, that if the powers of nature were traced to their source, we should find them also to be combined with intelligence.

4. But now conceive man as he is, possessed not only of the faculties of perception and action, but also of the ability to order his actions with purpose and contrivance. He gains then enlarged knowledge of mind. Mind is now not only that which perceives and wills, not only the intelligent and active being, but that which can combine its faculties in intelligent action.

In the conception of design man finds the key to the hieroglyphic of nature, which, once found, affords him an interpretation beyond the reach of doubt, or the force of mere analogy or probability. He now sees in nature—what was there before, but to him was nothing—not only vastness, but order; not only unity, but design; not only magnificence, but marvelous and innumerable adjustments and contrivances, all combining to secure the stability of the world and the welfare of its inhabitants.

It is not, then, by an argument from analogy that he discovers mind in the designs of nature. Mind and design are inseparable correlatives. Of mind in itself he knows nothing; he knows it indirectly as a power which designs. He knows it as intelligent in action, as well as in perception. He obtains this knowledge in himself, and can then apply it in the world. In his own actions he is able to combine and compare the outward results—the changes and arrangements which he effects in the material world, with the inward facts of intelligence and will which preceded them. It is through this combination, and in the immediate personal con-

sciousness of thought, intention, and exertion, that he learns to know himself as a being who acts with intelligence, to know himself as mind or spirit.

But he has no such personal consciousness of the intelligence of other men. He discovers them to be minds, as he is mind, only through outward observation, and has no immediate apperception of their inward thoughts. But the communication which has already taken place between his own mind and the world, has furnished him with a principle of judgment, which informs him that he is not alone, but lives among beings like himself. This knowledge, then, is not founded on analogy, but rests on that inductive principle of all knowledge, which compels him to ascribe every effect to an adequate cause, and to estimate the cause by the effect.

The theological design argument rests on the same foundation, and carries with it the same certainty of causal inference. There is design in nature. The material substance of the universe might fall into endless combinations of disorder for one of order. Design is exhibited, not in a few instances only—not in isolated cases, which might have resulted from chance in a world where all else were confusion, but in every corner of the world, in things animate and inanimate, manifest and concealed; in all the countless processes and arrangements to be discovered in air, earth, and sea. We want, then, an adequate cause of this order, and we find it in our knowledge of mind as an intelligent cause. It is not, then, a mere analogy, such as—man contrives through intelligence, and man is a living being, therefore *it is probable* that nature contrives with intelligence, and that this resides in a living being. It is more than this: it is an argument of causal necessity.

Truth is one, error is manifold. Order also is one, disorder may be manifold. There may be endless forms of chaos for one world clothed in order, and stored with the designs and adornments which cover the earth. These designs strictly prove its Author to be intelligent. For that which selects and appoints a form of order from an infinite number of possibilities, contains within itself an adequate cause of the preference. It must comprehend the design. We infer that intelligence is present, from the necessity we are under of assigning every effect to an adequate cause. Not that

we have immediate knowledge of the intelligence; but neither have we such knowledge in the actions of other men, nor in any case except in the operations of our own minds. We have always to pass from effects to causes when we go beyond the sphere of the self; and have as good reason in the present case as in any other, for the inference that the First Cause of all things orders and disposes all with intelligence.

Design, then, implies a designer; not probably, nor by analogy, but certainly, and as the only adequate cause thereof.

5. But are we not, after all, reasoning upon the principle—"Like effects must be assigned to like causes;" and is not this to reason by analogy, whether it be with reference to men or to God?

To this question it must be answered, that it depends upon the extent to which the argument may be applied. So far as the cause is known and estimated by its effect, it must be regarded as necessarily implied in it, and the knowledge of the cause by means of its effect rests on an identical judgment. Within this extent it is absurd to speak of a probable argument. But if we go on to draw conclusions as to the nature of the agent, or the manner of his action, beyond what is evidently implied in the facts, then the judgment becomes analogical, and can be no more than probable. Thus in the case before us, the First Cause can not but be regarded as Mind, because Intelligence is indicated in its agency, and intelligence is, in all human judgment, an essential and inseparable faculty of mind. It is by intelligent agency that mind is known as mind; and to infer mind from manifestations of intelligence, to infer from design a designer, is no more than a necessary induction. But if we go beyond this, and infer that the Great Creative Spirit of the universe bears a resemblance to that of man in His whole Nature, or in any particular beyond the immediate design itself; if we infer that His mode of action is similar, as, for instance, that he acts, like man, by means of material organs, or through a nervous organism, we then go beyond the identical judgment of causality; we reason in this case by analogy, and it may turn out to be a very improbable application of such an argument.

6. It is evident, in the present case, that no assertion is made, and no inference is drawn respecting the Divine Nature, beyond what is necessarily implied in the works of creation. To say the First Cause must be Mind or Spirit is not to explain the essential nature of His Being, but to affirm His agency to be *thus far* that by which mind is known to us. This, in fact, is all the knowledge man can have even of his own mind; for here also the essence is undiscoverable, and its nature known and estimated by its effects. These words *mind* and *spirit* may possibly include several modes and forms of being, differing from one another, it may be, as widely as the mind of man from his body. But whatever be their differences, if such there be, in other respects unknown to us, they must agree in this, that they are intelligent powers—powers which act with purpose, otherwise they could not be included under the term *mind*, but must fall under some class of existing beings wholly unknown to us, and beyond the sphere of our knowledge. It is not only possible, but, on every account, more than probable, that the Divine Mind is, in nature and manner of existence, wholly different from that of man: it is certain that the Divine Power and Intelligence must be very partially represented by the power and intelligence of beings like man. We have no means of learning, and, it is credible, no faculty for comprehending the mysteries of being, and can not expect to understand the difference between an existence absolute and underived, and one finite and derived; nor between the Power by which all things exist, the Intelligence by which all things are ordained, and that limited power, that glimmering of intelligence, which have been communicated to man, and suffice for all the purposes of this short life. We may well be content, then, for it is what becomes us, and what is forced upon us by the only principles of possible knowledge, to confess that Intelligent Power is manifested in creation, though we can neither search that Power to its source, nor understand the mode of its operation.

7. There is no weight, then, in the objection made by Hume, that we can not by analogy discover the cause of the universe, because it is a unique or singular effect, and we have no other universe with a known cause to compare with it. It would seem that we

do not want to compare it with another universe, nor with any thing else, nor to apply analogy to the case at all. We do not need to compare its designs with even the designs of man. These last must have furnished us with the notions of mind and of design; but as soon as we have gained them, we apply a principle which can not be questioned, without distrusting all knowledge both of ourselves and of the world. We apply the principle of causality to infer the existence of mind, as well from the actions of other men as from the innumerable adaptations of nature.

8. But to notice some other difficulties which have been raised. Is there not a wide difference between the two cases? Do we not, in the case of man and his actions, perceive both the cause and the effect; while in the case of the Creator and the universe, we perceive only the effects? Does not experience tell us that men make watches; how can experience tell us that God made the world? This is one of the specious fallacies of atheism, and derives its whole force from a confusion of thought. There is no essential difference between the two cases. In our knowledge of man—with the single exception of one's self—as well as in our knowledge of the Creator, we perceive the effects only, and not their cause. In one sense it is true that experience tells us men make watches; but in another sense, and this the only sense pertinent to the present argument, it is not true. If it be granted that you have learnt to know a certain figure, as that of a man, to be possessed of like powers and faculties with yourself, it is then true that experience tells you men make watches, and execute many other ingenious designs. But for the present argument we must go farther back, and descend to more elementary principles.

The existence of men and of the world might seem to be an allowable assumption; and many will think all inquiry concerning it to be mere gratuitous speculation. But the atheist forces us to the investigation of our most elementary cognitions. His denial of God is a rejection of the very principles upon which he founds all his knowledge of the world without him. If he refuse, then, to infer intelligence and will from the manifest designs of the world, we will not grant him that a certain figure, which appears to make watches, is moved by an intelligent mind like his own.

It is a well-shaped mass of matter resembling his own body, it moves, and speaks, and seems to act with design; but it is not living, it is dead. It is an organized mass, influenced to action by an inherent principle of order, which it has got from nature; but it does not really think of what it is doing, nor intend it. We have no perception of its thoughts or motives; and the outward manifestations of them, including all the different appearances which go to make up the notion of a man—these are but scanty and imperfect, in comparison of the innumerable evidences of wise intention and contrivance in nature. Be consistent then: do not believe that what you see making watches is an active, intelligent man: it is a mere natural automaton. You have no knowledge of intention or will beyond the subjective circle of your own thoughts.

But if this were an idle inference; if, in the common judgments of life, you do not consider it necessary to see a cause before you will confess it to exist, but are willing to see its existence in its effects; if you will believe that your infant is not deaf, as soon as a noise excites his attention; if you will be persuaded that he is not an idiot, as soon as he begins to show marks of thought and intelligence in his actions; and would think it ridiculous in any one to say—the child, however, is really fatuous, and only acts as if he were sane, because of a certain principle of order which inspires him; again, be consistent then: acknowledge, in the varied designs and endless adaptations of the universe, the existence of an intelligent and active Mind.

9. The preceding observations furnish an easy and an unanswerable reply to other difficulties which have been raised. It has been attempted, of late years, to discredit the design argument, by pressing it to a *reductio ad absurdum*. Granted, it has been said, that design implies a designer, and that a designer, as the theist infers, must be a person. But a person, the atheist goes on to argue, must necessarily possess organization. We have no knowledge of any unorganized person. All thought and exertion are dependent upon the actions of the brain and nerves. An organism must belong, then, to the Designer of the world; and not this only, but also outward organs, wherewith to mould the mate-

rial substance, and to arrange it. This supposed extension of the argument was patronized by Shelley.[1] "Intelligence," he says, "is only known to us as a mode of animal being. We can not conceive intelligence distinct from sensation and perception, which are attributes of organized bodies." Paley is imagined to have given occasion to this inference, by the admission that "capacities of contrivance and design require a centre in which perceptions unite, and from which volitions flow."[2] Though he here speaks metaphorically, his words have been taken literally, and the inference is then fair and unavoidable—there must be an organized frame, through which the perceptions unite, and the volitions flow from the centre. If this be granted, there is at once, says the objector,[3] an end to the argument from design; for we are compelled to acknowledge a Creator of the world's Creator, and an endless chain of Creators, one rising above another. The argument has been carried out, it is said, by Shelley—"From the fitness of the universe to its end, you infer the necessity of an intelligent Creator. But if the fitness of the universe to produce certain effects be thus conspicuous and evident, how much more exquisite fitness to His end must exist in the Author of the universe! If we find great difficulty from its admirable arrangement, in conceiving that the universe has existed from all eternity, and to resolve this difficulty suppose a Creator; how much more clearly must we perceive the necessity of this very Creator's creation, whose perfections comprehend an arrangement far more accurate and just. The belief in an infinity of creative and created gods, each more eminently requiring an Intelligent Author of His Being than the foregoing, is a direct consequence of the premises which you have stated. The assumption that the universe is a design, leads to a conclusion that there are an infinity of creative and created gods, which is absurd."

The notice of such arguments may require apology: for their weakness, like that of many a subtile theory of existence which has been gravely propounded, may be palpable to the intuitive reason of a child. But since they have been confidently put forward by an able and active atheist, and are said to have been com-

[1] Quoted by Mr. Holyoake. [2] Nat. Theol., c. xxiii. [3] Mr. Holyoake.

municated, with a challenge for their refutation, by "the atheistical society of London," to "the Philalethean Society of Edinburgh," and to have received no answer; the estimation in which they are held by their propounders may excuse some further observations.

10. The first and most obvious answer to this objection, is to grant the premises of the argument, and to deny the conclusion. Suppose it proved that a designer must be an organized being, yet will it not follow—if we may, with reverence, quote the words of Shelley—that the Creator is "a vast and wise animal," nor that there must be an infinite succession of creators. For the organized Creator must, in this case, be the world itself, which, at all events, is ordered and disposed with intelligence by a mind dwelling within it. If it be allowed that a designer must have an organized frame, still the design argument may prove that intelligence dwells in the world and orders it, acting through its material agents, as the intelligence of man through his body. This world then may, in this case, be called "a vast and wise animal," but it must be different from any animal that we are acquainted with. No animal can order and dispose for itself the matter which composes its frame. It does not communicate the properties to the various particles, nor arrange them, as it may think desirable. Man can not at will change his features or his complexion; he can not abstract diseased particles from his tissues; nor renew the feeble organs of old age. He can not "by taking thought add one cubit to his stature." His own intelligence has had no influence in the formation of his members: his physical constitution is dependent on causes beyond the influence of his mind. Some Superior Mind must have moulded him, by whatever means, for he can see that he is "wonderfully made." And the world also must have been moulded with intelligence, for the marks of law and design are every where palpable. If it be itself then the eternal being, if the formative intelligence be not superior to it in existence, it must reside within it, and must still be superior to it, at least as the Cause of its properties and combinations.

Hence if we grant that a designer must be organized, yet the design argument is still fatal to common atheism. It will give us

a pseudo-theism, which is in one sense more dogmatical than proper theism.[1] For the true doctrine acknowledges the existence of an intelligent First Cause, but pretends to no discovery of His manner of existence. To affirm that He exists eternally in matter is, in one sense, to go beyond theism.

11. But this is not the only answer, nor the most decisive. It may be farther objected that Shelley's premises are inadmissible.

Our argument is design implies a designer. It is replied—then this designer must be organized, or must comprehend in his perfections an arrangement far more accurate and just than what is manifested in the world. If we seek the warrant for this conclusion, we shall find that none can be alleged, except that the design argument is analogical, and that the atheist has as much right to extend the analogy as the theist to commence it. We have already answered that the first step—design implies a designer—is no analogy at all, but an application of an unerring principle of judgment, on which all human knowledge is dependent, but which can not be extended to any internal discoveries of the Divine Nature or mode of action.

The second step is manifestly no more than it professes to be—an inference by analogy, from designers known to us in the world. The first step is unavoidable—design implies intelligence. The second can not pretend to more than probability, and is destitute even of this. Man, it is true, can execute his designs only by means of material organs. But it is not at the point where the organs act upon matter, but where the organs themselves are acted upon internally by the mind, that we are conscious of the directing power of intelligence. The organs are intermediate between the mind and the workmanship which it contrives, because man's sphere of power is confined to the phenomenal world. He can act only on the surface, so to speak, of existing things. But we can not argue by analogy, that all intelligent beings must be confined to the same field of action. The forces of nature are not upon the surface of matter, but act through its substance. The Creator of

[1] Clemens Alex. (Strom. vii. vii.) notices the fancy of the Stoics, that the Supreme Being must have senses, because there is no other way of apprehension.

the world can act by the deep and secret agencies of creation, without conditions of organization. He may wield with wisdom, and direct at will the essential forces of matter, and powers more subtile than electricity. He is the source of being, and acts from the depths beneath. It is the surface only which is known to man.

Thus the design argument leads to a wise and powerful Author of the world, but affords no presumption that he must be organized, makes no discovery respecting His mode of action. It both corroborates and extends the conclusions which we have already obtained by a different process. We have seen that it is repugnant to reason to believe in an infinity of subordinate causes, and were compelled to take refuge in a First Cause superior to all conditions of space and time. This conclusion was founded on the principles of empirical knowledge, which give us a world of finite causes in space and time, without reference to its order or designs. The design argument confirms the cosmological and goes beyond it.

Other observations of nature in ourselves and in the world, will yet farther extend our knowledge of God, and corroborate the conclusions which this argument draws from the physical arrangements of nature. Enough has been said to justify our concluding, in words long since used by Reid:

"It seems, then, that the man who maintains there is no force in the argument from final causes, must, if he will be consistent, see no evidence of the existence of any intelligent being but himself."[1]

12. It may not be useless, in illustration of the principles which have been laid down, to notice their complete negation in the dogmatic atheism of M. Comte. His scientific attainments have gained for his observations on philosophy and theology an attention which they are uniformly too preposterous to merit on their own account. His conclusions, on the most momentous questions, are such as may be expected to follow from his denial of all psychological knowledge. "It is out of the question," he says, "to make an intellectual observation of intellectual processes. The observing and observed organ are here the same, and its action can not be pure and natural. In order to observe, your intellect must pause

[1] Sir W. Hamilton's Reid, p. 461. Intell. Powers, vi. vi.

from activity; yet it is this very activity that you want to observe. If you can not effect the pause, you can not observe; if you do effect it, there is nothing to observe."[1]

In like manner he professes to deny all knowledge beyond that of phenomena and their laws. "Our study of nature," he says, "is restricted to the analysis of phenomena, in order to discover their *laws;* that is, their constant relations of succession or similitude; and can have nothing to do with their *nature* or their *cause*, first or final, or the mode of their production."[2] And again, "The inquisition into the essence of things which always characterises the infancy of the human mind, occasions, first, the conception of gods, which grew into that of souls, which became, in time, imaginary fluids."[3] He therefore rejects all hypotheses of "fluids and imaginary ethers, which are to account for phenomena of heat, light, electricity, and magnetism." "Those who, in our day, believe in caloric, in a luminous ether, or electric fluids, have no right to despise the elementary spirits of Paracelsus, or to refuse to admit angels and genii."[4]

Professing, then, to confine himself to the observation of the phenomena and laws of nature, he commences from mathematics, and rises through the several sciences, astronomy, terrestrial physics, chemistry, physiology, to sociology, or the science of social life, denying that there can be any such thing as internal observation of the mind, or any knowledge of the causes of phenomena.

But does he not assume, throughout his whole work, the results of the very processes which he repudiates? Why did he compose his Positive Philosophy? Doubtless to enlighten mankind. But how does he know that there exists in the universe another intelligent being like himself? No man can have that immediate consciousness of the minds of others which he has of his own. M. Comte has surely some apperception of intelligence in himself, which he can not possibly have of the intelligence of any other person. When he acknowledges man to be an intelligent and moral being, what does he mean by this language? And how can

[1] Vol. i. p. 11, of "A Condensed Translation of the Positive Philosophy," which has just appeared (1853).
[2] Ib. p. 225. [3] P. 228. [4] P. 226, 227.

he have learned to use or to understand it, unless by internal observation of his mental processes—observation which nature led him to make, without effort of his own, and of which he retains the results throughout his life, however he may pretend to ignore it?

Internal observation, and this alone, can have discovered to him that he is a moral and intelligent agent, or have taught him the meaning of the terms. But he has no such knowledge, he can make no such observation of other minds. Whence, then, has he discovered that other men exist, who may be enlightened by his labors, and whose progress is the aim of his science of sociology? He has learned it by that other intellectual process which he pretends to ignore; by inferring the existence of other minds from the phenomena which show marks of intelligence—by induction of the unseen cause from the visible effects. Whatever may be the force of his objection to the hypotheses of electrical or luminiferous fluids, which is no question of metaphysics or of theology, he certainly assumes and applies the very principle which he professes to set aside, when he affirms the existence of other minds besides his own. Internal observation can alone discover that he is himself an intelligent and emotional being, or enable him to use the words; the principle of causality must be applied, along with self-knowledge and observation, to discover the existence of other intelligent and emotional beings, and to justify the fundamental assumption of sociology, that there is such a thing as society in the world. Thus, on his own showing, the theological notions of childhood, which he so much despises, are better founded than the positive knowledge of his manhood. He continues through life to believe in the existence of other men, but denies the principle on which this belief rests, and rejects another belief resting on the same foundation. In the theological period of childhood, the mind acted spontaneously, and was consistent in its conclusions. So true it is that God teaches the child better than the aged can teach himself.

Consistent with this curiosity of speculation, are M. Comte's observations upon two different methods of philosophy, "by passing from the study of man to that of external nature, or from the

study of external nature to that of man. . . . All theological and metaphysical philosophy proceeds to explain the phenomena of the external world from the starting point of our consciousness of human phenomena; whereas, the positive philosophy subordinates the conception of man to that of the external world. . . . If the consideration of man is to prevail over that of the universe, all phenomena are inevitably attributed to *will*—first natural, and then outside of nature; and this constitutes the theological system. On the contrary, the direct study of the universe suggests and developes the great idea of the *laws* of nature. . . . Schools of theology and metaphysics regard the study of man as primary, and that of the universe as secondary. The positive school founds the study of man on the prior knowledge of the external world."[1]

According to Mr. Comte, then, to find in the mind the key to the hieroglyphic of nature, to recognize the marks of an intelligent Creator in the universe, when once the notion of intelligence has been gained from our own minds—to subordinate the universe to man, is the method which, in the opening of his work, he presumes to denominate "the theological or fictitious," the method which is followed in the infancy of the individual and of the race, but which it is the business of life and history to outgrow! But does not the universe subordinate itself to man, in order to come within the sphere of his knowledge? Is the universe known in itself—in its absolute nature? Is not all knowledge relative? What is light without the eye? How does the universe become visible, but through the minute picture upon the retina? Man can not gain the knowledge of an existing world distinct from himself, but by means of his intelligence and will. It has been shown at length that without will, and without the knowledge of one's self, originally acquired in the action of the will, man could never gain the knowledge of a single phenomenon of the world, much less of any succession or connection of phenomena by laws of nature. One might think, to read M. Comte, that men were born with a perfect knowledge of the universe already acquired, and, though always using their faculties, remained in ignorance of their possession to the end of their days. In fact, all the powers and

[1] Vol. i. p. 356.

qualities by which the universe is known, are but the universe subordinated to the cognition faculties. This truth is implied in the very word *phenomenon*, to which our author is so much attached. The very term might have reminded him that all knowledge of the universe is, and, in the nature of things, must be subordinate to the mind which knows them. It has been shown at length that the consciousness must be the starting point of human knowledge; and we may therefore accept the inference of M. Comte, that "all phenomena are inevitably attributed to will," and the theological system is unavoidable.

And this is the basis of the philosophy which dogmatically assumes it to be the law of human progress, that "each branch of our knowledge passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the theological, or fictitious; the metaphysical, or abstract; and the scientific, or positive." These are the proofs that M. Comte was "a metaphysician in his youth," and has risen superior to metaphysics. On such foundations it is established that the theology of his childhood—of that period of life, in the individual or in the race, which is nearest to the Being from whose hands they came forth—that the theology of his childhood was a fiction, and that the atheism of his manhood is truth. On such principles a mathematician and naturalist has presumed to declare in this age of dawning reason, for the enlightenment of long-deluded humanity, "To those unfamiliar with a study of the celestial bodies, Astronomy has still the character of being a science pre-eminently religious; as if the famous text, 'The heavens declare the glory of God,' retained its old significance. But to minds familiar with true philosophical astronomy, the heavens declare no other glory than that of Hipparchus, of Kepler, of Newton—in a word, of all those who have aided in establishing their laws."[1]

[1] Quoted by Sir W. Hamilton, Discussions, p. 312. The translator of "The Positive Philosophy" hopes that the work "may convey a sufficient rebuke to those who, in theological selfishness or metaphysical pride, speak evil of a philosophy which is too lofty and too simple, too humble and too generous for the habit of their minds;" and considers it "the strongest embodied rebuke ever given to that form of theological intolerance, which censures positive philosophy for pride of reason and lowness of morals." Whatever may be said of its morals, it certainly can not be charged with pride of reason.

And this is subordinating man to the universe! But it is idle to argue in such a case. There is no such man as M. Comte. He is altogether an imaginary personage. The name is found, it is true, on the title-page of certain books. But these books declare the intelligence of none except their readers. They are not the productions of a human mind. Even if they showed consistent evidences of an intelligent author, we should not be justified, on their own principles, in concluding that he exists; far less when they exhibit only one side of the human intelligence, and that the lowest. Reason is inductive as well as deductive; and the mind must be stripped of its unavoidable aspirations and feelings before it can imagine its destiny to be fulfilled in the pursuit of science. Assuredly the work is from no intelligent human author. It is "a rebuke" to the metaphysical dogma, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit.*" It has come into existence of itself.

SECTION II.

THE DIVINE WILL.

13. The first Mover.—14. Divine Freedom and Necessity.—15. Divine Motives unsearchable.

13. The preceding section has led to the conclusion that the First Cause of the world is a living, intelligent Being. He is therefore a Spirit. He acts with intelligence in creation, and disposes all things by His will. Will, as known to man, is the faculty of acting with intelligent purpose, and mind or spirit is the possessor of this intelligent will.

This faculty belongs to man, and, he may see assuredly, is not altogether under the constraint of prior influences. But suppose the soul were endowed with faculties and movements, which are not only the partial, but the total causes, necessitating every motive and action of life. Suppose the human will be an illusion, we have still decisive evidence that it is from God, and must, on this supposition, derive the first causes of its actions from His agency in creation. Instead of arguing with the atheist that man can discover no marks of will in himself, and therefore can not

expect to see them in nature, we ought rather to conclude that, if he can not find them in himself, it becomes the more necessary to look for them in nature. If his actions do not originate in his mind, he must regard himself as constrained by some mind able to act upon his own. And it must be some mind; for that which acts through his mind to move his actions into correspondence with external occasions and appearances, with inward feelings and desires, must manifestly act with design. The constraining influence must possess then, at least, the same claim to be called mind which is possessed by man. If the First Cause of all existence be the originating Cause of all will in man, He must possess a much stronger claim to be regarded as Mind or Spirit, because He has that power in reality which belongs to man only in appearance.

Hence the Supreme Being must, in this sense, be absolutely free. There can be no cause superior to Him. There can be no such thing as constraint from without. All motives of His agency must lie wholly within Himself. Even the pantheist admits this sense of the Divine Freedom—a freedom from external constraint, though maintaining that all things result from the internal necessity of His Nature.

14. But the pantheist presses his notion to the exclusion of all liberty of choice. He maintains that every Divine action, as, for instance, the creation in all its parts, results from the necessity of the Divine nature, affirming that a power of choice between things indifferent is the attribute of imperfect beings. If two opposites, it is argued, be equally possible, and there be no cause to determine one of them rather than the other, the decision is dependent upon chance. Every effect must either have its sufficient cause or be determined by accident. He therefore forbids us to regard creation, or any single disposition of it, as an act of choice.

It is here necessary to bear in mind the distinction between a physical and a moral necessity. Enough has been said to exclude the former. As regards the other, without doubt it must be morally necessary that God will do what is good and right. His own Nature is the Eternal Law of right, and He is incapable of being influenced by any contrary motives. It can not be otherwise but that His Infinite Power will act according to His Infinite

Wisdom and Goodness. Or rather, since it can be only from our human point of view that the Divine Attributes are manifold, the Divine Power will be the expression of Wisdom and Goodness in action. God is free then, though He necessarily loves truth and hates a lie: for truth is that which accords with His eternal Nature, a lie is that which contradicts it. The eternal law of right must rest in the eternal Nature of God, and the Divine agency can not but correspond to this law of holiness. Thus far the question of choice is inapplicable.

It may still be asked—Does this moral necessity extend to the whole agency of the Almighty, and determine His work in the universe to be in all things exactly what it is?

We have here, it is evident, a curious and a useless question. We may argue, from the diversity and contingency of things in the world, that such necessity does not extend to all things. We can imagine no *necessity* why men should have double organs, nor why the number of planets or of human beings should be precisely what it is. But it is a mere idle speculation, and deserves no farther attention than to observe that the pantheist has no sufficient warrant for affirming choice to be the act of an imperfect being. It can prove nothing of the agent, but only shows that, external to himself, different courses are open which may equally subserve his ends. In the Divine agency it can signify no more than that, in the relations of created things, there are various conditions which may equally fulfill His sovereign purpose.

15. And this is all we can know on so mysterious a subject. The question of motives internal to the Divine Nature is manifestly out of our sphere. We have good reason to believe that the Creator will love His creatures, and will give them means of happiness and faculties of enjoyment. He gives us proofs of His Beneficence in nature, the desire of it in our hearts, and in His word of truth the assurance that "God is love." But we can not know the motives, so to speak, which have determined Him to create at all. Reason can bear us to a Great First Cause, but can not look into his unsearchable Nature, much less affirm that the connection of causes and effects, which is universal within the sphere of our observation, is in any way applicable to the Divine Essence.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

1. Personality; how known. — 2. Charge of Anthropomorphism. — 3. The word Person.

1. It is a common objection of atheism, that—even when we have proved the Creator of the world to be a Living Power, who acts with wise purpose—we are still far from establishing the doctrine of theism; because Life and Power are, after all, but attributes or properties, and the Being to whom they belong is still unknown. This First Cause, they allege, is a mere abstraction, a personification of certain notions of our own minds, which can not be regarded as a real Being, because we have no known object to which we can attach them.

The same objection, it is evident, may be made to the existence of matter, the favorite being of the atheist. What can we be said to know of matter, beyond its properties or attributes, and of these except in their relation to ourselves? Of the real substance, beyond the properties of sensation, we have no knowledge but indirectly, through the causal principle of the intelligence—the very same principle which informs us of the existence of other men, of one's self, and of the great Being who possesses that Power and Wisdom which are manifested in nature.

It is a misconception to imagine that we can not affirm the existence of a Personal Being, without some deeper knowledge than that of properties or attributes. We know mankind as intelligent beings, and also as sensible objects. Intelligence is not more plainly an attribute or property, than whatever is discovered in sensation. But because the sensible is what strikes us first and most readily, we are apt to fall into the habit of looking upon the sensible object as real, and regarding it as the substance to which intelligence belongs. The unreflecting mind connects its notion of an individual with that of a certain form and appearance; and

has not yet learned that many a man is better known from the pages of history than from the figure that daily passes along the street. It is not the height, or weight, or mass of matter, which gives us our knowledge of a man. We learn something from the face, for this is an index of the mind. Its expression may, with less impropriety, be called an attribute of mind, than intelligence can be called an attribute of matter. But every one knows, on the least reflection, that the personal self is something quite independent of the material substance; and that all knowledge, whether of mind or matter, is a knowledge of properties or attributes.

Yet notwithstanding this easy correction of our first rough notions of things, the atheist arms himself with the false association, to attack our cognitions of the Deity; and thinks he can either force us to the admission, that the visible world is the body in which the Creative Spirit is resident—which gives us, it is supposed, a God not distinct from nature—or else leave us with a barren abstraction, instead of the Personal Being of whom we were in search.

Enough has been said to show that our knowledge of God, as the First Cause of all finite causes—the Source of all being—the Power which has originated the existence of matter and of mind —the Intelligence which has fitted and harmonized the parts of creation, and adapted its living creatures to the purposes of life, by endowing them with the faculties of intelligence, of feeling, and of will; that this, with the truth most fully discovered in revelation, "God is Love," is a knowledge of a living Being as definite and as real as any knowledge we can obtain. It is the only kind of knowledge that we can conceive to be possible to us.

2. There is no force, then, in the difficulty, perpetually reiterated by atheistic writers, that "man draws together from his own peculiar nature the qualities he assigns to the Being who governs the universe." This objection, so far from supporting atheism, is perfectly consistent with theism. Human words and human notions, however inadequate to express the incomprehensible nature of the Most High, are surely competent to inform us of His revelation of Himself to humanity. It is true that the finite can not

comprehend the Infinite; frivolous to infer from this that the finite can have knowledge of the Infinite. The reason of man, and his faculty of language are gifts derived from the Creator with his being; and the knowledge which they are able to convey, however imperfect and inadequate, is true as far as it can go, and is such as He intends us to attain. We can not know Him as He is; but we can know Him by His manifestations of Himself in nature and in our minds; and these, at least, can be embraced in human thoughts, and expressed in human words.[1]

This relative knowledge, then, is no more to be considered a mere negation, or an empty abstraction, than any objective knowledge we can possess. We speak of a certain relation to ourselves, when we say of matter that it is hard; we do the same thing when we say of God that He is good. When He is said to be powerful, it is meant that He reveals Himself to us in works, which, in human thought, are works of power. When He is regarded as wise, it is signified that He is the Author of a world, abounding in those marks of exquisite design and order, which, in human language, are marks of wisdom. If we think of him as good, we mean, precisely as of an earthly parent, not that we know the depths of His Nature, or can see how goodness resides in it, and springs from it; but that his dealings with us are such as show that He desires our happiness and well-being.

If we find evidences in nature and revelation that His agency is ruled by attributes of justice, and goodness, and truth; if we can see that wrong-doing tends to misery, and can thence infer that it must be abhorrent to the nature of Him who ordained the laws of the soul's life; if we find ourselves to be so constituted, that goodness and virtue have their reward in themselves, and carry with them their own assurance of a happy life hereafter; if we have reason to think that we are in this life dealt with as children of an Eternal Father, who has placed us in a state of moral probation; if this be true, it matters not, what may be the exact relations of our human ideas of anger, compassion, love, to the nature of the Eternal Godhead; it matters not in what way His deal-

[1] Οὐ γὰρ ὡς ἔχει τὸ Θεῖον οὕτως οἷόν τε ἦν λέγεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὡς οἷόν τε ἦν ἐπαΐειν ἡμῖς οὕτως ἡμῖν ἐλάλησαν οἱ προφῆται.—Clem. Alex. Strom. ii. xvi.

ings with us are dependent upon His Eternal Essence; it matters not that we can not know Him in His Absolute Nature; let it suffice that we know Him—as we know one another and the world—in His relations to ourselves His creatures, in those laws and effects of His Divine Agency, on which depend our welfare, our happiness, our immortality.

3. There can be no ground, then, for objecting to the word PERSON, in its application to the Supreme Being. The importance of the truth it conveys is known to every religious mind. We are now concerned with objections to it. There is necessarily something vague in its signification; but it is remarkable that they who object to it, forget that it is vague in its application to a man. It is very difficult, even in this case, to define its meaning; impossible to define it so exactly as to indicate wherein personal identity consists. We are accustomed to attach the word to a certain form and appearance, with certain mental powers and dispositions; but can not know what it is that establishes his personality, under all the changes to which he is subject.

It is no wonder, then, that the word is, in some respects, indefinite, in its application to the Supreme Being. It can not here include those limitations and conditions of time and space which belong to finite beings; but, in other respects, its use is similar in the two cases. It expresses the definite and certain truth, that God is a living Being, and not a dead material energy. Whether spoken of the Creator or of the creature, the word may signify either the unknown but abiding substance of the attributes by which He is known to us, or the unity of those attributes, considered in themselves.

God is a personal Being. Such is our answer to those who say that God is nature. It has been shown to be a true answer. It is easy to affirm with confidence that the nature we know is the Eternal Being. But such assertions are met with better reason. What is the nature that we know? It can be no other than the nature that we see. But *seeing is not knowing.* Atheism is not only an attempt to bring the incomprehensible Creator within the compass of our human faculties: it is a perversion of these faculties in the first principles of their use.

He who will not believe in the God whom he can not understand—let him inquire what he understands of himself. Is he not here also like a child, who can ask more questions than can be answered? Born but as yesterday, he knows not whence; existing, he knows not how; feeling a life within him, which he can neither prolong nor protect from danger, nor even know, but in its effects: he may imagine himself, if he will, to be an empty bubble on the ocean of unbounded Being; and may fancy the winds of that ocean to be the iron breath of unfeeling, unpitying fate. But in all the ignorance which is common to man, in all the arrogance of theories, he never doubts that he exists, nor hesitates to regard himself as a personal being. The world of phenomena convinces him of this truth: let him look again to that world, and study it; for it tells him no less clearly—THERE IS A LIVING AND A PERSONAL GOD.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REVELATION OF GOD IN THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL.

1. Reason and Feeling ultimately coincide.—2. Evidences in the Feelings.

IT may be said to be a natural revelation, which makes known to man the existence of the Supreme Being. Reason discovers in itself that there must be a First Cause superior to the world, and learns from nature that He is living, intelligent, and wise. It may be expected that the same great truth will be discovered, or at least confirmed, by other facts of consciousness depending on the other faculties of human nature, especially those of the feelings and affections. This part of man's constitution furnishes abundant testimonies to natural theology.

1. To mention the feeling upon this subject, will be likely to raise the expectation of the atheist, that we are about to fall into the confusion between what we wish to be, and what really is. It is a common boast of unbelief, to rely not on feeling, but on reason. Nothing is more certain to be set aside with affected contempt than an appeal to the feelings in the discov-

ery of truth. But it must not be forgotten that reason itself is undistinguishable from feeling, in the attainment of its fundamental truths and principles. No philosophy can be wholly demonstrative. All knowledge must rest upon intuitions, or self-evident truths, or upon faith in the veracity of the faculties. Man enters upon the use of his reasoning faculty, already furnished with the principles on which all knowledge must be built. In his first experience, reason and feeling unite and are inseparable from one another. The mind, though not passive in receiving impressions, is wholly spontaneous in its action. It takes up those impressions which are forced upon it, in that communication between the soul and the world, which is not dependent on any volition of the mind itself, but is a necessary result of the prior constitution of things.

Nature is the teacher of man in infancy, and of the irrational creatures throughout their life. It impresses and trains the mind in early experience, as it guides the bird or beast through its instincts. These are natural impulses or feelings, essential to the dumb animal, for the preservation of itself and its kind. They never mislead, but are invariably true and safe. Man possesses in his peculiar gift of reason the power of consideration and reflection; but till he arrives at the commencement of his knowledge, he is no less dependent upon nature than the brutes.

The atheist will often express a wish that the Most High had manifested Himself with such clearness as to make doubt impossible. How, then, should He have so discovered Himself to man? Not to the senses surely; for it is but the surface of the material world, and nothing whatever of the mind, that can be discovered through the senses. Nor yet to the reason—at least not to the logical faculty, which is applied when the fundamental principles have been ascertained. It could only have been through some higher faculty, which could have made intuition of the real nature of God and all creation—which had been to make us equal with Himself—or else, if we were to exist as subordinate beings, by some revelation to our minds, which we could not have distinguished from feeling. And, in fact, the word "reason" is constantly employed to signify not merely the deductive faculty, but,

as we have used it, the faculty of the mind for the discovery of all truth, whether of induction or logical deduction.

Writers who have investigated the question of the origin of knowledge, often use indifferently the words—faith, feeling, and reason—in their account of it; and the difference between philosophical systems which profess to be founded upon the feelings, and those which are founded upon the reason—the difference between mysticism and rationalism or idealism—is often a difference of words rather than of things.

2. Man's early education is from nature. The question is—Is this nature which teaches him a mere blind agency, the law of some unknown power which is devoid of life; or is it the law and action of an Intelligent Supreme Being? The reason, which is man's peculiar possession, must be called in to decide upon the question; and, with this view, must examine the facts, and sift the evidences which nature supplies. This, then, is a fair question to be examined—What are the primary facts, discovered in the affections of the soul; and what is the right interpretation of them? The feelings may thus furnish their independent testimony upon the nature of Him who has implanted them.

If the atheist's demand that a Divine revelation should force assent, can be conceived to be answered only by such an influence upon the mind as must present itself under the form of feeling, let him not decline the evidence which the feelings are able to furnish, because they do not force his assent, in spite of himself. The creatures of the Great Creator may expect to find evidences of His Being in every part of nature, and in every part of their own constitution. If nature be penetrated by the pervading Spirit of the Infinite, it may be anticipated that His Presence will be discovered in the feelings of the soul.

It is not by neglecting to take account of the affections that we are likely to arrive at a right conclusion upon the Character of the Creator or the destiny of man. They are a prominent and essential part of human nature. When once it has been ascertained, by innumerable evidences, that the Creative Power of nature acts with intelligent purpose, it becomes important to examine the feelings by the light of reason; that we may ascer-

tain the capabilities of humanity, and thence infer the purpose of our existence. This, it is true, is an inverse application of final causes. But it is very different from predicting the character of the Divine agency in distant spheres.[1] Constant experience may show, that, while we are left in ignorance upon speculative matters of little moment to us, the suggestions of nature on all points of close practical import are ever truthful, and to be trusted. The feelings then tell us something of what we are fit to be; and so, by evidence of which the force can be appreciated by all, give us assurance of what we shall be.

SECTION I.

SENSE OF THE MARVELOUS AND BEAUTIFUL.

3. Sense of the Marvelous.—4. The Marvelous in Nature and in Life.—5. The Sense of the Beautiful.—6. Beauties of Science.—7. Not Utilitarian.

3. *The sense of the marvelous* is one of the strong feelings of humanity. If it be not universal, it is seldom altogether wanting. A man who is destitute of it must be regarded as of defective nature. For certainly the feelings are an essential part of human nature; and it is as reasonable, as it is common, to regard the unfeeling man as inhuman.

But in truth, although the sense of the marvelous may, by nature or by development, be possessed in different degrees, it can never be wholly wanting, without leaving the mind destitute of that natural curiosity which is so essential to the first experience of childhood. The common things of the world are as full of the marvelous to a child as the most extraordinary to a man; and the feeling they excite is the powerful incentive to that constant observation and attention which are so essential to the mind's development. Without this feeling, man could never gain knowledge, nor even become intelligent. He must remain fatuous to the end of life.

The sense of the marvelous is dependent on the perception of

[1] See Book iii. chap. iii.

ower superior to one's self. One of the first feelings awakened in he mind of a child, is that of dependence upon others, whose ower is perceived to exceed its own. Even this ordinary dispo- tion of nature deserves attention. No reason can be conceived, eyond the simple fact that it is so, why we should begin to live n total imbecility, rather than in the full possession of our facul- ies and powers; unless it be by the disposition of the Universal Parent, who has ordered the world, and the course of life, with eference to His intention in placing us here. This arrangement of nature is well adapted to beings who are placed in the world, hat they may learn to know their subjection, and to confess their lependence upon the Lord of nature. If the world be a state of probation for a hereafter—if to learn be the great purpose of life; we can then see a reason, in final causes, why it is that so large a portion of it must necessarily be spent in learning how we are to ive but a few years longer. But if the whole purpose of our existence be in the present, it can not but appear strange that nature, which in other respects has disposed all things with so much wisdom, should have ordered that, on the average, more than half the duration of human life should be spent in prepara- ion for the few years which remain.

It may be answered, no doubt, that the operations of nature are wrapped in mystery, and that we are incompetent judges of final causes. But at least it is more satisfactory to rest in the belief, that this life is preparatory to a life to come, and commences in helplessness and weakness, because its chief purpose is to lead us to the feeling of submissive dependence upon its Author.

4. Nature abounds in objects which may excite a sense of the marvelous at all periods of life. It always directs us to the illim- itable. As reason unavoidably tends to the absolute and uncon- ditioned, so the marvelous in nature excites in us a feeling of the Infinite. To gaze upon the expanse of the ocean or the immensity of the sky, to muse upon the multitudes of the starry hosts, stirs the soul to a sense of its own littleness and feebleness and of the power and majesty of nature, and puts it in a posture akin to that of adoration. Such feelings, like all others, are subject to decay, when oft repeated, without assured belief in the presence of the

Infinite Spirit, who holds communion with man and sympathizes with his affections. Or sometimes they give rise to a dreamy mysticism, which looks not from the self to the Infinite, but delights in the idle reverie of self-contemplation.

But the reflective mind, which thinks with feeling and feels with thought, is led by the immense and marvelous in nature to the Almighty Spirit who pervades all things and fills all nature with His Presence. It is led by feeling to a conviction stronger than it can express in words, that a Great and Wise Being must have spread abroad the heavens and the earth, and shut up the sea within its bounds. The feeling is supported by common sense. "You may talk as you like," said Napoleon to the skeptics, pointing upward to the stars, "You may talk as you like, gentlemen, but who made all that?"

This sense of the marvelous is also awakened by the events of life. It is shown in that desire of excitement, that eagerness to hear of something extraordinary, and to know more than is permitted us. Such feelings are a principal source of the pleasure we take in the great events of history, and even in works of fiction and dramatic literature. It is sometimes thought remarkable that men are apt to be so deeply interested in a narrative known to be fictitious. It is a proof that man is capable of finding pleasure in emotions which are not excited by the common things of life. Hence he will sometimes hang with eager attention on tales of the supernatural. Men forget that history is more marvelous than any fiction, and more significant of human destiny than imagined messages from the dead.

The atheist has not failed to remark on these prejudices for the marvelous and unknown, and to account among them the notion of a Divine Being, imagining that he thus showed the notion to be unfounded.[1] But how does this appear? Is it to be lightly assumed that man is born with certain feelings and prejudices which serve no end but to make him the sport of his own delusions? Or is it not more probable that the same Power of nature which gives him his principles of all knowledge, and discovers the existence of the outward world, has also endowed him with such feel-

[1] As in the "System of Nature," part ii. chap. iii.

ings as are suitable to his condition and prospects, and direct his thoughts to the Author of his being?

5. *The sense of the beautiful* may include all the feelings which are excited by beauty, of whatever kind, whether in nature, in science, or in art. The pleasures arising from these sources must evidently be dependent upon some relation between the universe and the soul of man. The pictured landscape and the gorgeous sunset are beautiful only to the inward sense; without it, the traveler would look unmoved on the richest scenes of nature. On the other hand, man might have been susceptible of this feeling, yet have inhabited monotonous plains or a barren rock like the moon, where he must have been a stranger to the pleasures which are derived from the varied scenery of the earth.

We need no exact acquaintance with the philosophy of the sublime and beautiful to be familiar with the soul's sensibility in relation to external nature. Custom, hereditary indifference, accidental circumstances, may variously change and modify the sense in different people or individuals; but this can not affect the manifest fact, that human nature, in its proper development, is sensitive to feelings which the Cosmos—the adorned world—is so well calculated to excite.

We can conceive no cause of this adaptation, except in the design of One Intelligent Author of both man and nature. It seems as though, in the words of Madame de Staël, "the physical world were the basso-relievo of the moral. If the same genius were capable of composing the Iliad and of carving like Phidias, the Jupiter of the sculptor would resemble the Jupiter of the poet." "Nature," she says again, "delights in giving more splendor to the flowers than to the vegetables which serve for food. If what is useful held the first rank, would she not adorn the nutritious plants with more charms than roses? The beautiful recalls to our minds an immortal and Divine existence."[1]

The sense of the beautiful, like that of the marvelous, tends to raise man above himself, and to stir that feeling of the Infinite which corresponds to the Absolute of reason. It excites this feeling in the mystery of its origin, and in the perfection of its ideal.

[1] Germany.

The soul is moved by beauty to admiration or to love, but can not analyze its affections, nor account for them, nor trace them to their source. And they tend to the conception of perfect beauty. Natural objects have always their imperfections. They lead the mind to seek, in its beau ideal, a perfection not realized in art or nature, but which it would fain persuade itself is something more than an empty notion of its own. And thus, through the various kinds and different degrees of enjoyment which this sense affords, the expectation arises of other scenes of beauty and other forms of existence, capable of yet higher and more varied gratifications than this present world.

6. It is worth notice how often the sense of the beautiful is excited, by reducing the various and manifold phenomena of nature to some single principle or law. This observation applies especially to the beauties of science; and the most remarkable instance is the law of gravitation. Few minds are insensible to the pleasure of tracing back the various movements of the material universe to the simple law of attraction. It was a great and interesting discovery to learn that one and the same force retains the moon in her orbit, and causes the apple to fall to the ground. This may not appear obvious to all readers. For why does not the moon fall to the earth like the apple? But if the apple, instead of falling by itself, be projected horizontally from the hand, it will then descend in a curve line; and the greater the force of projection, the longer will it be in reaching the ground. And when it reaches it, it falls with a force which would have carried it farther if it had continued in free space. Hence, if it could be projected with sufficient force, it would go beyond the earth, instead of falling to the ground; and if the force were not too great, and there were no atmosphere to stop the motion, it would fall round the earth, and be always falling to it, instead of going off in a straight line, yet would never reach it. It would continue always at the same distance from the earth, and would revolve about it. But when this single cause of attraction is carried out into the innumerable phenomena of astronomy, the planetary and lunar inequalities, the precession of the equinoxes, the flow of the tides; when it is found that the force which retains man on the surface of the globe is the

same force which binds together the universe, and extends its influence to the distant systems of the sky; the mind can not avoid the feeling, that immensity is comprehended in simplicity; and passes, in this feeling, to the One Cause and Principle of all the forces and beings of nature, who gives, at once, their existence, their diversities, their harmony, and their movements to them all.

The direction of science is always from the complex to the more simple. It tends to trace back the many to the One. And the mind is so constituted, as naturally to find pleasure in this tendency. The question recurs—Is it a mere accident that it is naturally delighted with the variety and beauty of the world, and, in the mysterious feeling of the beautiful, rises to the expectation of a better life? Is it but chance which has disposed it to be gratified, when it thus finds a single principle which may account for many effects; as if nature would put it in the way of referring all things to One Great Cause? If this constitution of the mind can not, of itself, be considered a demonstration of theism, at least it falls in with the doctrine. It corroborates the stricter proofs. It is exactly what we might expect, if we knew nothing of the world or man from experience, but had learned that they were the workmanship of an All-wise Creator, and formed a state of probation for a future life.[1]

7. Such considerations become the more forcible, when we observe that the sense of the marvelous and that of the beautiful are not necessary for any utilitarian purpose of life. They are not meat and drink. The pleasure they give is something distinct from material interests, and even opposed to their exclusive pursuit; for they die out of the soul which wastes its energies in paltry world-ambition, or the acquisition of gain. We may be told, indeed, that their purpose is the development of the race in their intellectual and moral nature; that they point to this end, and tend to it as their effect. But the question remains—Whence these faculties of improvement? And have they no end to serve in each individual? The atheist may rest content in ignorance; but the mind instinctively breaks through the restraint, and will answer,

[1] Οὐκ αὐτοποιητὸν ἐπὶ γῆς τὸ κάλλος, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χείρος καὶ γνώμης πεμπόμενον τοῦ Θεοῦ. Athenagoras Legatio, 34.

in spite of skepticism—These faculties are from a wise and good Creator; who, as the All-real Being, contains in Himself the eternal source of all excellency, which can ever be displayed in creation; who would be known by man as "Perfect Beauty," worthy of all praise and adoration; who, after the highest progress of man in time, and his continual advancement in eternity, will still be the Source of all perfection, still "the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

SECTION II.

THE BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS.

8. Instincts and Affections.—9. Evidences of Immortality.—10. Marks of the Divine Character in Nature.

8. In the benevolent and social affections of the soul, is to be found the source of some of the best and purest happiness of life. They afford at once beautiful instances of creative purpose; and, beyond the manifest designs, convey intimations of the Creator's intentions concerning us, in the gift of orignal capacities and affections, which find not their satisfaction upon earth. It is in these and the other affections, that, together with the indications of a Creator, we find the most credible evidences of immortality.

The Wisdom of that Great Power, who has wrought in nature, is richly and variously manifested in the instincts of animals. It is seen in those natural faculties, which prompt them to the exact habits for which their organs are adapted, and direct them to the supply of their wants, and the rearing of their young. The same designs are manifest, in a higher degree, in the constitution of man; and compel us, if we will use our reason at all, to infer the existence of a creative mind.

But the affections of the human soul are not, like those of the lower animals, blind instincts which find their full employment in providing for the wants of the present. Who does not know that the feelings of the heart go far beyond any calculating or utilitarian purpose? Some feelings or instincts there must be for the continuance of the race, and for the possibility of political and

social union. But the best attachments of the heart tend beyond the necessities of life. There is something more than animal instinct in the affection of a parent, and in those loves of kindred souls, which are rare indeed, amidst the selfishness of the world, but have been known to be stronger than the love of life. Such affections can not be conceived to be educed from insensate matter, through the action of blind eternal laws. It is impossible to ascribe to such an origin the adaptations of the material world; it is equally repugnant to reason, far more abhorrent to feeling, to imagine that the concourse of impassible atoms, or the movements of electric fluids, could ever have given birth to the love of a mother, or the sensitive affection of a child.

It is true that men exist, by whom these and all the best affections of human nature are neither possessed nor appreciated. It is certain that the sordid calculating spirit, the sensual mind, the absorbing love of gain, is incompatible with the best affections. The low enthralling desires, the groveling ambition of self, speedily debase the soul; drying up its fountain of generous affections, and leaving it a mere instrument of hard reason and calculation; such as it might have been expected to be, had that Creative Power which never works in vain, intended it to soar no higher than the processes of material development, and the advancement of a material philosophy. But humanity is to be estimated by its best and highest moments, not by its degenerate types.

9. Little attention to nature discovers it to be a general law, that she does nothing in vain, and always accomplishes her ends by the shortest means. It is true that we are generally incompetent judges of her purposes, till the observation of facts has informed us of the end, as well as of the contrivance. But her innumerable designs are too plain to be mistaken. They are not less evident in the mental constitution of man—his reason, his affections, his moral nature—than in the material adaptations of the world. If we are to regard ourselves as mere transitory productions of nature, who live our day and die forever, we can assign no probable origin nor adequate purpose to the highest and best faculties. If an unintelligent, unfeeling power, directed by necessity or chance, be regarded as the cause of all things, this power

is chargeable with the singular inconsistency of manifesting consummate wisdom in all those lower designs, which have their complete fulfillment in the brief period of animal life, and casting aside this wisdom when she put forth her highest energy, and bestowed her most glorious and godlike gifts on man.

Is it not more likely that we who observe nature, and pass judgment upon her designs, are chargeable with inconsistency; in acknowledging her manifold wisdom in all her works which we can understand, and then refusing to credit her wisdom any farther than the purpose may be palpable to our eyes? For certainly her labor is in vain, if she have made us capable of pure and exalted affections, which are only fanned into life to be speedily stifled in the thick, chill gloom of death. The Power which has wrought in nature is surely too good and too wise to have provided so abundantly for our lowest wants, and to have made no provision for the highest and best affections of the soul. It is instinctive to us to reject the notion, that these affections have been bestowed for no purpose beyond the present state of existence; where, though capable of pure and holy happiness, they are so seldom able to attain it; and, when they do, are soon torn asunder and disappointed. The natural feelings, which no logic can refute, for they are deeper than logic, refuse to believe that One less than a God of Love has given life to the lovely and the loving soul. They naturally repose in the hope and consolation of religion, and look to God and to eternity for the revival of those affections, which, in their best estate, are subject to sadness and fearfulness in life, and are so soon to be divided by the unpitying hand of death. The truth of God and immortality can alone give any account of their existence, or promise them the satisfaction they desire. The heart can rest in peace, when it believes that a Great and Good Creator has bestowed on us the capacity of sympathy and love, that we may love both Him and one another, in a more enduring existence.

10. It is hard to imagine that, in this marvelous and beautiful universe, man, so little and so fleeting, should alone be capable of love. The soul looks out of itself upon the creation, and, from the face of nature, draws its instinctive inference of the Presence of an

All-pervading and Good Spirit; just as by feeling, which it can not analyze, it will draw its inference from the expression of the living face, and think it knows something of the man. By a mind thus sensitive nothing is viewed merely as mechanical. Every thing is full of life; nature is the language of a Spiritual Creator, and is responsive to the spirit of man. In the majestic firmament of suns, is manifested the Majesty of the Almighty; in their abiding laws, His Unchangeable Consistency; in the slow processes and developments of the material world, He is seen to act with patient determination; never precipitating things, working by slow unerring laws, which accomplish their ends with a certainty that may well be fearful to one regardless of the laws of right, since the moral laws, so manifest in man's constitution, must as certainly continue, and effect their ends in ages to come, as the physical laws have continued in ages past.

But the soul desires and anticipates, what nature again confirms as true, that the Creator may be One whom it can love. It sees good marred with evil in the world, and evil often dominant over good; but it finds enough to satisfy it, that all good is of God, all evil of the creature. It beholds the goodness of the Creator in the loveliness and innocence of a little child; and can infer the evil that springs of man, from the fear of what the child may become in after-life. And thus it is able to look on all nature. The shadows of the universe will not hinder the devout spirit from contemplating its brighter aspects with affection to its Author. His smile is in the gladdening sunshine of spring; His care in the rich fields of autumn; nature's velvet mantle, her flowered robe, the varied profusion of her adornment, indicate the Creator's disposition to His creatures, and His will that they be cheerful and happy.

Or if nature oppress by her vastness, and excite awe by the uniformity of laws which must soon deliver us to death, the soul finds strength in her own feelings, which may be firm against the forces of the universe. In her sense of feebleness, she has the assurance of a Protector; in the desire to possess the regard and affection of a Heavenly Father, the certainty that she will possess them. She is the creature of that Creator, whose work is every

where, and every where suited to its end. He imparted her affections; and, in so doing, gave a promise that He will not despise them.

SECTION III.

THE SENSE OF DUTY.

11. An original Faculty.—12. It is universal.—13. Pantheism in its relations to Morality.—14. Atheism in its relations to Morality.—15. The Epicurean System.—16. The Stoical Morality.

11. The observations of the preceding sections have weight, at least as corroborative evidences of the truth of theism; and are, to some minds, its most convincing proofs. The theist can not doubt that the Author of nature speaks to the minds of His creatures through their feelings, and discovers Himself by means which they may often be unable to analyze, or to make known to others. The soul may hear His Voice; while it knows not by what way He approaches it.

But the evidence which depends on the sense of right is generally considered more independent and conclusive. It is in his moral nature, next to revelation, that man has the strongest argument against pantheism. The distinction between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between moral good and evil, must be assumed as a fundamental and inevitable fact. It is implied in such words as *duty*, and *right*, and *ought*, which are to be found in all languages. The word *ought* carries with it a peculiar sense of its own, and bring us into a new region of ideas. It introduces us, we may say, into a new world. Other sciences tell us what is or must be; what ought to be is altogether a distinct inquiry.

12. To say that the notion conveyed by this word is universally understood by mankind, it must be isolated from all question of the *what* or the *why*. Men may differ widely as to *what* ought to be done under given circumstances, and *why* one line of conduct should be preferred to another. They agree unanimously—or, if there be any exception, it will be allowed to prove some men to be degraded to the brutes—that of two opposite courses, one is

often right, the other wrong; one ought to be followed, the other avoided.

The love of children is a natural affection, and most men will allow that a parent ought to love his child. But some tribes have offered their children in sacrifice, regarding this enormity as a paramount duty. Others have exposed or murdered them, when the natural feelings of love and duty have been worn out by privation, or other cause; perhaps excusing themselves with the thought that necessity compelled them to do what they ought not; perhaps still holding to other duties, or imagined duties, which are at least a homage to the truth.

But the conduct of unnatural savages can no more set aside the sense of duty, as a fundamental fact of human nature, than their ignorance and mental imbecility can be alleged to prove that man is not an intelligent being. The faculties of the mind, and the facts of human nature, are to be ascertained by reference to the highest, not to the most degraded types of mankind. Whatever be the condition of savage and cannibal tribes, it remains true that man possesses a peculiar sense of right and wrong, a feeling that this ought to be done, that to be left undone. Every man may see, if he will, that there is a constant opposition of good and evil in the world; that there is, or has been, some struggle between duty and inclination in himself.

In short, there is a faculty in man, distinct from all others, which assumes the right of governing the rest, and of commanding him in his conduct. Its commands may differ in different men; they may be altered or modified by many circumstances; they may be ascribed to various sources of authority; but the fact remains, that there is some authority which utters *the moral imperative* within the soul and commands it to do this or that.

This, then, if it be considered attentively, is an important fact of man's nature. It is a specific and peculiar property of his constitution. He might have been, in other respects, what he is; he might have possessed the same physical nature, the same senses, the same intelligence, the same power of action (though without choice), yet have been destitute of all notion of duty, unable to attach a meaning to the proposition—"This is what I ought to

do"—or, therefore, to form the word on which its meaning is dependent.

13. Now it must be allowed that a theory which accounts for all the facts of human nature, is preferable to one which denies them. The pantheist looks on the distinction of right and wrong as one of mere appearance, depending upon man's limited and partial views, and having no ulterior meaning. Virtue and vice, then, are mere names of things, as they appear to myself, or connections of finite things, in their relation to one another. They have no higher significancy, and are equally necessary determinations of the great *All* of things.

This theory is not only an assumption, but one which gives a less simple, and less probable account of obvious facts than the doctrine of theism. When it is granted that, as far as human reason can go, there is a manifest distinction of right and wrong, and the question arises—"Has this distinction meaning beyond the limits of reason?"—it is more probable to assume that it has than that it has not. For if it extend no farther, if the distinction of right and wrong be unmeaning beyond the world of appearance, whence, and how, and why does it arise in this life of ours? If every event, and every action of human life, be but a link in the great chain of necessity, how comes it that man is led by nature to trouble himself with an *ought?* Why should he be perpetually harassed with calls of duty and feelings of right, if right and duty be mere phantoms, which have no existence but in his own imagination, and serve only to scare him, or to sting him with remorse? To account the sense of right among the motives of fate, which determine actions in their course of necessity, is to attribute to a blind fate or chance, not only the power to create, but also the disposition to deceive—and that too a disposition which is often thwarted in its attempts. This is to make nature not only a deceiver, but a weak deceiver; a deceiver, in influencing man's conduct through motives resting on imaginary duties and obligations; a weak deceiver, in suggesting such motives, and then leaving them, as they so often are, fruitless of all result, except a vain and false regret that a man has not done what he ought to have done and could have done.

This, to say the least, is an improbable theory. It is at variance with the law of parsimony, that "nature takes the shortest way to her ends." If we were reduced to a choice of assumptions, the doctrine of theism has here so much the advantage of pantheism, on the ground of simplicity, that this alone would go far to recommend it. Instead of leaving man the sport of unavoidable delusions, theism assures him that the motives of moral obligation are as truly momentous as they appear to be, and extends the difference of right and wrong beyond the mental world of man to the relations in which he stands toward the Supreme Creator. It assigns, what reason and feeling demand, both an Author and a purpose of his moral constitution, representing the moral principle as the spring of those motives, which are to keep the will of man in union with the Will of Him, who has communicated active powers to subordinate creatures.

14. The atheist will often, he may think sincerely, acknowledge, with the theist, the distinction of right and wrong, and the obligation to do right. But he can give no account of the origin or use of this obligation. He may call it a fundamental fact; but he denies, what is a part of the fundamental fact, that the mind instinctively refers the obligation to a Lawgiver and Judge. Without this reference, the words *ought* and *duty* lose that distinctive meaning which the mind can not help attaching to them. The atheist is inconsistent with himself, if he deny a superior Power while he uses words which imply One. The notion of duty, in the proper sense of the word, becomes a delusion. He who acknowledges no Power superior to himself, in effect claims to do as he will; or, at best, to indulge his taste, or to be guided by rules of expediency and public law. To deny the Supreme Being, and then talk in fine words of truth, and virtue, and morality, is much the same thing, to compare things infinite with finite, as for a man to turn his parent from his doors, and then amuse himself by venerating his picture.

15. The Epicurean system is a denial of morality. A man's pleasure or happiness is his chief good; and he is to determine for himself wherein his pleasure shall consist. Modern utilitarianism has higher aims and pretensions; for its purpose is not the

happiness of the individual, but the general happiness of the race. When connected with atheism it is, no less than the selfish system, at variance with the incontrovertible fact of consciousness, that the notions, *truth*, *virtue*, *duty*, are independent of all considerations of pleasure or utility, whether of one person or of many; are often opposed to such considerations, and involve that which claims to be superior to them. These schemes have no answer to the question—"Why ought a man to seek the happiness of others, even of all mankind, rather than his own?" and "Why his own ultimate advantage, if he choose to prefer present pleasure?" A law is null and void without a lawgiver and a magistrate. A man does not feel bound to submit to a code written in some old book which he has dug out of the ground. Yet such is the origin of the atheist. He regards himself, with all the laws of his nature, as the chance product of materialism. Talk as he may of laws of morality, he is better than his speculative philosophy, if he do not set them at defiance whenever it may be his inclination. The love of mankind is a noble principle, but it is inseparable from the love of God. Pretensions to either without the other are of equal value, whether in atheists or in religionists.

16. The Stoical morality seeks its principles of right in human nature, and enforces them, because they tend to elevate the character of man to its highest dignity, and with a view to self-complacency and self-esteem. This is the highest morality of atheism. The Stoical atheist finds a law within himself, which tends to the harmony of his soul and the elevation of his nature; he pretends to give no account of it; he knows of no Lawgiver; but he adopts the law, constitutes himself the magistrate, and then rewards his own obedience, and repays himself for his exertions on the side of truth or virtue, by imagining himself a hero or a god.

Error is partial truth. Unquestionably virtue and goodness tend to harmonize the soul, and to exalt the character. But whence this tendency? Whence the feeling that it ought to be fostered, though often at the cost of self-denial? And what restraint can be imposed on one who is willing to sacrifice his better qualities to the gratification of his vile and malignant passions? Temporary excitements may be thought to compensate for degeneracy of

character, if there be no life beyond the present. Meanness may skulk through a few short years, and, being blind, imagine itself unseen. But no one can deliberately choose to be destitute of every generous quality and aspiration, who believes that the soul will live on through death, though the cloak of mortality be laid down.

Thus the Stoical system is open to similar objections with the former. Moreover it reduces human life to a course of solemn trifling; such as it would be, if nature terminated the life of all, as soon as they have passed through early childhood and have gained possession of their faculties. In the school of virtue, the best of men are but learners to the end of their days. The Stoic dies before he deserves his self-esteem. The whole of a well-spent life effects that work for the noblest part of man, which is effected for his lower faculties during childhood—a strong indication that the perfect life of the soul will be hereafter.

Theism alone takes account of all the facts of man's moral nature, and gives them an origin and a purpose. Man is the creature of a wise and good Creator, and is capable of independent conduct. He is placed in life, as a state of trial, and possesses, in the gift of life, powers of responsible action. In the nature of these powers he may find indications of the Divine Character. But before he examines them minutely, he may see that the sense of duty in its most abstract form—the absoluteness of the moral *ought*—is an evidence of a Being superior to himself, who is not only a Creator but a Lawgiver; not only a Lawgiver, but a Judge. And he has motives higher than the Stoic. On the question—Why a man should keep his word—he can see that the answer of the old philosopher is true as far as it goes. "The philosopher," says Locke,[1] "would have answered because it is dishonest, below the dignity of man, and opposite to virtue, the highest perfection of human nature, to do otherwise." This reason, though imperfect, is better and nobler than the same illustrious writer puts into the mouth of the Christian: "Because God, who has the power of eternal life and death, requires it of us"—a servile motive, which exposes Christianity to the criticisms of infidelity. The Chris-

[1] Essay, i. 3, § 5.

tian's motives are not merely an obligation to Superior Power. They are to be sought in the Divine Character, *and the relations of the creature* to the Creator.

SECTION IV.

THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL.

7. A Purpose necessary.—18. Misery of Indolence.—Conclusion.

17. Labor, and anxiety, and contending effort, fill up the checkered drama of human life. Few men, whatever their station or their education, can altogether quell the feeling of self-degradation, while they propose to themselves no end nor purpose beyond the indulgence of the present desire, or the gratification of the passing moment. That most wretched of beings, the restless pleasure hunter, who flutters from one excitement to another, with as little thought, reason, or expectation, as the ephemeral insect—even he, if one address him in those unavoidable intervals, when he lounges in listless depression, and torments himself with vain attempts to kill the time, and ask him what end he proposes to himself in life—will sometimes hardly disguise his confusion, when he reflects that he has no purpose at all; that his pursuits are those of the vilest irrational being, and his enjoyments can be no more enduring. The least reflection convinces every man that he ought to have a purpose, and no light purpose in life. Voltaire used all his wit, to laugh the world into the idea that life is nothing; but with little success. In the endless varieties of human pursuit, few can quite repress the feeling that life is a very serious thing.

The more common condition of men is to be striving and toiling for some end, which they have proposed to themselves in the present. The battle of life is a common phrase, and expresses the truth that men are continually endeavoring to rise, and to pass one another in the world. Some are engrossed in the pursuit of wealth; some make an idol of power, or professional success, or intellectual achievement, or other object of ambition. Some work their way by honest endeavor, others have recourse to the arts of

flattery or intrigue; but few comparatively are content to be what they are; very few are so torpid, that, if they care not to employ themselves well, they make no effort to appropriate the rewards and honors which they will not earn.

18. Let us observe this fact attentively. It is manifestly natural to man to be unhappy when he has no engaging pursuit, and is without the prospect of rising, in some way, beyond his present condition, or of accomplishing some end which he has set before him. "Work is our only worship," says the atheist, assuming the fact of which we speak. For what end then? we may ask. Is it all but labor in vain? He may answer that we find ourselves unhappy in indolence, and may add with truth, that indolence breeds not only wretchedness, but vice and moral meanness.

This, then, is an original fact of man's constitution. He is such by nature that it must be so. But can no reason be given, is no assignable end to be served by this disposition of nature? At least it must be admitted that a system which does inform us why we are constituted in this or that way, and shows us duties which devolve in consequence, is preferable to one which simply admits the fact, but can neither account for it, nor assign it a purpose.

The misery of indolence urges man to seek some diversion or pursuit; and yet he finds but discontent, and disappointment, in even the most brilliant success. What excited eager ambition in the pursuit, fails to bring happiness when attained; and, if it can look no farther, leaves the soul still restless and dissatisfied. If the pursuit be wealth, a man will far exceed his first notions of competency, and will spend his life in toil and self-denial to accumulate what he never enjoys, and though he care not who may be his heir. If it be the honors of rank, a loftier title, a higher place in the senate, a star, a riband, are of mighty influence in the hands of government. And the possessor of intellectual and moral faculties will often value such things for their own sake, and not as badges of merit or good service; nay, will sometimes think success in gaining them the atonement for meanness and knavery in their pursuit. And the thoughtless world will chime in, to give countenance to the lie. But this ambition which aims at mere personal display, is as vulgar, and calls into action no

higher faculty of man's nature, than the rivalry of dress in humbler walks of life. That its ends, when attained, add nothing to a man's true dignity or happiness, is but a preacher's truism. They may increase the pomp of worldly circumstance, and buy the cheap incense of flattery; but they neither insure the respect of self, nor the esteem of others. They are no food to the soul. They can not cover its nakedness, in a life separate from the material.

The misery of indolence—the eagerness of endeavor so often devoted to frivolities—shows that man has an original and urgent tendency to press forward to something which he is not, and to be seeking something which he has not. The strength of this disposition is wonderful, when it is contrasted with the physical weakness of human nature. One who can neither perceive the disease which lurks within him, nor shake off the slight malady of a day, can put forth an energy of will, and carry out a course of conduct, which may perpetrate atrocious crimes. The victim of an aching pain may deluge kingdoms with blood, for the gratification of his rude ambition and savage lust of power. And these are they whom the world, in its half-civilized ages, calls great. It honors with the title not those who have devoted their great powers in the cause of duty, to the advancement of freedom and civilization, and the welfare of mankind; much less a Howard, whose patience and strength of will were devoted to the alleviation of suffering; but such as, with lower mental endowments than a Howard—say what they will of his dullness—have led subject hosts to wholesale carnage, have been willing to sacrifice the happiness of thousands, and the interests of the whole species, to the aggrandizement of self; and have gained for themselves an empty name, a splendid robe, a circle of flatterers, and a tomb. There are eternal elements in human nature; but in this greatness there is nothing enduring, except its frequent crimes. Nothing is truly great but what is eternal in its tendencies. Truth, justice, honor, mercy—these stand in close relation to the Eternal Attributes of the Highest, and look to a destiny beyond the finite and perishable. The love of God and man is above human praise, and superior to disappointment and weariness. Its work is in time, but its aim is in the Infinite Beyond.

Thus, in the constitution of his own soul, man may read the prophecy of an immortal destiny, and may learn to direct his aspirations to Him who is forever and ever. His temples to his own honor are shivered to atoms by a single spark within the soul. "Alexandre, si célèbre dans les histoires par ses illustres brigandages, entendait quelquefois dans le plus secret de sa raison les mêmes reproches que les assassins et les voleurs, malgré le bruit confus des flatteurs qui l'envirronnaient; et César, au passage du Rubicon, ne put s'empêcher de faire connaître que ces reproches l'épouvantaient, lorsqu'il se résolut enfin de sacrifier à son ambition la liberté de sa patrie."[1]

Is it likely then, after nineteen centuries of Christianity, that the world will now retrogade to atheism, and the aspirations of the immortal spirit seek satisfaction in the conceits of a positive philosophy? An array of facts and a digest of laws were beggarly elements for the soul, if they were the only food of its intellect and its feelings. It will ever strive to soar higher, in spite of every attempt to bind it down. It can not be satisfied with statistics and calculations, till it shall have laid aside its most generous faculties and desires. The materialist would scoff at its feelings, and question its moral obligations; he would interdict every region of truth, beyond the appearances of sensation; and regarding man as but a machine of finely-moulded clay, would confine his intellectual occupation to the work suitable to a machine. Nature has not made man the automaton which his case requires, and he would have him curtail himself to an automaton. Facts are at variance with his theory, but so much the worse for the facts. They must give way to the theory; though to change them, is to change the whole nature and constitution of man. But the soul recoils from a tyranny more presumptuous than any which has sought to bind it in fetters. It takes pleasure in observing facts and laws; but can thus engage only a portion of its powers, and these neither the loftiest nor the most inquisitive. Its moral powers have no sphere of exertion in the investigation of mechanical causes: its feelings may be chilled and dead through inaction, though it should have gone back, by its intellect, from cause to

[1] Malebranche.

cause, till the whole universe has been resolved into its ultimate forces.

The soul can not reconcile itself to the notion, that countless and complicated designs, which extend far beyond its own power of observing them, and are at length discovered only through the refined contrivances and intricate calculations of science, are, after all, mere appearances of design and no work of a designer. It can not conceive the possibility that the many combinations and adjustments by which the world is adapted to the physical condition of its inhabitants are all alike the happy results of the happy concourse of atoms. But this is only the beginning of its difficulty. Man is the wonder of creation. "In earth there is nothing great but man, in man there is nothing great but mind." Such, however, is not the doctrine of the atheist. He must rob the mind of every thing that makes it great; that chance—a word without objective meaning—may create from atoms the mental as well as the physical universe.

The sense of the marvelous and beautiful are feelings against which he must be on his guard, or they will certainly lead him into error. They find, however, their corresponding objects in nature, and are the source of much happiness in life. The benevolent affections too, must be watched; but they are a fortunate endowment for man, the offspring of atoms and chance; for since many men have accidentally sprung to life, it is convenient that they possess some disposition to live together in society. The domestic affections are very dangerous: and since it is difficult to console a bereaved mother by telling her that so many infants die of every hundred; and since feelings so strong may be a foundation for inferences unfavorable to atheism, it will be well to adopt some social scheme, which will separate the child from the parent, and conceal the parent from the child. It is somewhat unfortunate to any theory to be opposed to the strongest feelings of the heart, and those which bring the purest and best joys of life; still more unfortunate, when it must assume that nature, which has generally been so happy in her plans, has, in her accidental arrangements for the propagation of her various species, ordered that the inferior animals shall be guided by strong natural instincts to pro-

tect their young, and left man to learn, by his distinctive faculty of reason, that such instincts are not to guide himself, and that, though he possesses them, nature might have contrived better.

But the moral nature of man — we will suppose the atheist to be a moralist. Suppose him to allow that he is endowed with affections, as well as with a calculating and logical faculty, and finds among them a conviction that he ought to do this, and to leave that undone. But his *ought* can mean no more than that he should gratify and cultivate good taste, and raise himself above the vulgarity of wrong-doing; that he should indulge and develop his benevolent affections and his love of order. He may admit that human nature, in its best phases, is endowed with certain moral tastes and tendencies and dispositions. But we must not examine them too closely. We must not ask — "Who constituted us thus?" The theist takes a more comprehensive view of human life and the larger sphere which embraces it. He finds that many distinct particulars combine to make life, what reason will regard it, a state of moral trial. He exists here in a world which conceals the Creator from his immediate vision. Such a constitution of things is essential to probation. For faith is dependence on the Invisible; and the field of human life is the scene of difficulties to be encountered and temptations to be overcome. Its sufferings are correspondent to moral evil. They teach him that sorrow is to be expected in a sinful world, while they call forth energy and effort, and furnish new kinds of probation. In himself he finds faculties adapted to the world he inhabits, and, at the same time, capable of working together for one end, as if to acquit himself well were the chief end of life. His whole nature is adapted to a state of probation. He has an originating will and power of choice; intelligence to direct him in the preference; moral feelings, which act as motives; moral judgments, as correctives. He is impelled to action by the misery of indolence; his sense of the marvelous and beautiful excites curiosity and desire; his sense of justice and goodness gives powerful incentives to exertion. And his character is dependent on his conduct. The neglect and abuse of his powers bring certain degradation, and rob the soul of its best endowments.

The feelings of the soul thus direct man to the Creator, and furnish indications of His character. The sense of the marvelous is impressed by the manifestations of Infinite Power. The perception of design, the love of order, the delight found in the simplicity of principles and the unity of laws, are susceptible to the manifestations of Infinite Wisdom. The happiness which is dependent on the designs of Providence; that which springs from the feelings and perceptions of the soul; its delight in the true, the beautiful, the good—in physical or moral beauty; these awaken it to the contemplation of Infinite Goodness.

Again, he is capable of religious feelings, and he finds himself in a state of being which draws them into action. He is moved to adoration by the grandeur and vastness of creation; to reverence by the moral intuition of a Lawgiver, whose Nature can be the only Fountain of Eternal Holiness. His preservation in feebleness, his life of dependence, suggest the feeling of dependence and gratitude.

But can he look to God as a Father, and love him with filial affection? Upon this question must depend the free exercise of all his religious feelings. He may hope the best from a Creator whose love is over all His works; but what can he expect from the sin within himself, which he feels to be his own work? Nature without revelation affords him but an uncertain answer. The immensity of the universe, its vast plans, the profusion of suns which adorn the night, the long, unfailing constancy of material processes, may move him to a silent and wistful dread of the unchangeableness of Divine Justice, in moral plans as vast and steadfast as those of nature.[1] There is much waste in creation, as far as man can understand it: many seeds ripen but to rot, many creatures die before they have well begun to live. May there not be such waste among the suns of the firmament? for a sun, to Infinite Power, is but as the seed of a little flower of the earth. The moon appears to be a barren and useless rock, and, in her feeble light, we may find but an inadequate purpose of her existence. We can not know that this is true: it is possible that nothing may

[1] The following passage stands as it was written before the publication of "The Plurality of Worlds."

be useless; every thing in creation may be subservient to important ends. But it is otherwise, as far as our knowledge can go of the world we live in. May there not be a like waste in the moral creatures of the universe? May it not here also be possible that many are brought into being, few answer the end of their existence?

On this fearful question revelation alone can give answer. It responds to the feeling of sinfulness, and directs the laden soul to a Saviour. It is under the guidance of revelation that the feelings and faculties have found their highest and best expansion. Let them be bound down to the ground, let them be forbidden to soar to God, and they are soon blighted and decay: raise them to the Infinite in perfections, and they are drawn out, ennobled, and exalted. Quell the aspirations of the spirit, and man is degraded and debased: raise them to an immortal life and destiny, and they find their fit employment, and live in the contemplation of their objects. It is a proof that the feelings and aspirations are the gift of One who intends them to be directed to a future life, and to be elevated to Himself.

But what is the meaning of atheism, when it treats conscience as a deceiver, and the moral nature as a delusion? It tells us man is subject to errors and delusions. He is apt to feel that he ought to do this or that, but another may feel exactly the opposite. There is something like a moral law in his nature, which forces itself upon his attention; but there is no written code of its precepts, and no universal agreement upon them. Weak minds are subject to a mistaken self-reproach when they think they have done wrong, and a foolish self-approbation when right. And the law seems to have reference to a Lawgiver and Judge. But resist the law, when it is convenient or desirable; follow what is profitable and pleasant; steel yourself against fanciful feelings, and do what you will; and you soon find conscience to be a deceiver. Its censure and its praise grow weak; its law fades away altogether; the notions of Lawgiver and Judge are found devoid of all assured reality.

Yes: the characters of the law do indeed die away within the soul; but they die, like the characters on Belshazzar's wall, after they have written the sentence of impending evil. The man has

succeeded in moulding his facts to his theory: he has changed his nature and constitution, and may now find in himself no revelation of the Most High. He may now live as he pleases, he may do his will without restraint or fear; till at length the machine is worn out, and the living clay becomes dead clay. Death changes it but little from what it was, and this little is for the better. In life it had much labor in vain; it was ever toiling and scheming; forming plans and following them out; always in restless movement, and for no end: life had nothing to offer which could deserve so much thought and effort, and the soul in vain strove to rid itself of the feeling of vanity. The clay is no more devoid of purpose than it was before; but it is wiser than it was; for having nothing to do, it is at rest.

But is there no *may-be* to disturb the prospect of repose? The *perhaps*, which is despised in life, may become formidable in death. It would have been wise to act on a possibility. And is not atheism a scheme of endless improbabilities, and even irrational and preposterous? If otherwise, would it not be prudent to trust the feelings of the heart, even though it were found impossible to establish them, on principles of reason and common judgment? If skepticism were the only philosophy, there is enough, even in a chance, to disturb one in the prospect of an unknown future. A man must have been blameless in life; his conscience must be without offense at its close, or it should be an uneasy reflection that after death, there *may be* something more than an eternal sleep. So thought a great interpreter of nature:

> "For in that sleep of death what dreams *may* come
> Must give us pause."

Theism finds a purpose in life which takes account of all the facts of consciousness, and has employment for all the feelings of the heart. The soul which feels, though it can neither reason nor calculate, may be moved by the beauties of nature, or may gaze with awe on the sublimities of the star-lit sky; and in these feelings, which are the revelation of God in man, may find the conviction to be spontaneous and inevitable—This material universe is the garment by which God is seen, it is the vail which hides Him from the sight. But when it looks from the world to its people,

and observes their various faculties, and their mutual relations, and perceives how all things combine to one great purpose of human life—and that a purpose so consistent with the truth which it had learned from the material world alone; then it is that the accumulated evidence is irresistible.

In this purpose every energy obtains its action, every feeling its object, every aspiration is satisfied, and man fulfills his manifest destiny. The soul which is at one with God, finds that confusion to cease within itself, which reigns every where in the world. Peace and pure joy are his, and the harmonious action of his powers in one course of duty, and for one great end—to know God, and to dwell eternally in His kingdom.

He is to that soul the Fountain of Being, the Pervading Spirit, the Author of sublimity and beauty, the Eternal Law of truth and right. He is Himself its hope and its reward. He has given it all it enjoys in this world, and He can give "greater things than these." He can give a more perfect nature, more refined senses, more noble powers, more excellent faculties of enjoyment; and, with them, their corresponding objects, in a glorious and immortal life.

The best joys of earth are tempered with sadness; the gentler feelings are often offended; the intense affections, the self-sacrificing love, oft crushed and wounded to the ground. It is because man is capable of feelings, which life can never satisfy. But in God they have rest and satisfaction. He is known by them as Perfect Beauty, and Perfect Holiness, and Perfect Love. In Him all holy and good affections have their proper blessedness. He is the Portion of the virtuous and loving soul; the Keeper of all worthy objects, which may be torn from it in the world.

"Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and Thou art exalted as head above all."

BOOK III.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER IN NATURE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

It was the purpose of the former Part to examine the principles of Natural Theology, and to show that man is able to look through nature up to nature's God. The means of knowledge we have found to be as safe, and the knowledge as valid, as any that he can have beyond the sphere of his mental consciousness. It remains to consider the evidences, in nature and revelation, of the Character of that Great Being, who is before all things and above all. He is thus far known as the Self-existent Being, and the First Cause of creation. Things visible can not have come into existence of themselves, can not continue in their own power. Whether they be always dependent on the Divine Energy, or in any way independent of it, the very conditions under which they are known as finite compel the mind to regard them as derived, if not always dependent on the Infinite. The difference between a past finished creation, and a continued creative operation, may perhaps have no meaning in its application to the Supreme Being. It is a difference depending on relations of time. He is superior to these relations. But however incomprehensible His Nature or His Agency, it is certain that He is the Source of all being. Finite beings have begun to be, because He exists and willed it; they continue, because He can not cease to be, and wills that they shall continue. Whatever may be the advancement of knowledge, the common notions, that all things were made by Him and are preserved by Him, that they are finite and changeable, He Infinite and Unchangeable, express sufficiently all that it is possible or

necessary for man to know. "By Him all things consist." He is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever."

Evidences of the Divine Character are to be found in the wise and benevolent designs of creation, and in the moral constitution of man. The Creator is known by His works, as the conduct of a man discovers the qualities of his mind. This part of the subject depends chiefly on the physico-theological, or design argument. The manifestations of wise, holy, and benevolent design, in man and nature, will lead us, by strict inductive inference, to recognize the Infinite Wisdom, Holiness, and Love, as well as the Infinite Power of the Supreme Being.

CHAPTER II.

THE WISDOM, UNITY, AND INFINITY OF THE AUTHOR OF NATURE.

1. Priority of Mind to Matter.—2. Partial Knowledge of God's Ways.—3. Creation by Law.—4. Astronomical Arrangements.—5. Stability of the Solar System.—6. Chemical Relations.—Varieties of Substances.—7. Their Proportions and Arrangement.—8. Geological Conditions.—Maximum Density of Water.—9. Laws of Meteorology.—10. Concurrence of Natural Systems.—11. Adaptations to Animal Life.—12. Mystery of Minuteness.—In Vegetation.—13. In Origin of Material World.—14. In the Human Frame.—15. Divine Unity and Immensity.—16. Distances of the Stars.—17. The Nebulæ.—18. Other Evidences.

1. THEISM affirms, in opposition to atheism, that mind is prior in existence to matter, and establishes the truth by means of the argument from design. The world of human knowledge may be said to consist of two worlds in mutual relation, but in their nature wholly distinct; the world of mind manifested in thought, feeling, will; that of matter manifested in the physical properties of extended substances. Of these we have seen that matter exists in such a way as to be capable of receiving and transmitting impressed forces, and of recording in itself, and exhibiting to distant ages, many events of its previous history. Mind, on the contrary, is known in each individual man to have existed but a few years. The known world of matter is undoubtedly prior to any human intelligence. But is there no Intelligence prior in order of being

to that of the human race? prior even to matter, so far as this can fall under human cognition? The material world itself furnishes an answer to the question which should be decisive; an answer which can not more reasonably be disputed than the fact that it exists at all.

Let this ancient being then—this material substance—be summoned by the late-born reason, to give account of itself and its origin. Let it be examined upon its present and its past conditions, and required to deliver up the records on stony tables, written more indelibly than "with an iron pen and with lead in the rock;" that answer may be made, whether in the present or in the past; in all the glories of nature and the wonders of science; in the mystery of its minuteness or of its immensity; in the least speck of creation which can be rendered visible by the microscope, or in the grandest objects of the telescope, it offer a single pretension to be the first existing being; or whether it do not every where bear testimony to an Intelligence prior to itself.

Run, then, through the immensity of space and time, from the least discernible speck to the immeasurable magnitudes of stellar systems; from the world as it is before you, through all its ages backward, till the massive curtain of granite is drawn across the unknown past; or still farther, if you can, to a diffused mist of nature, or a system of disjointed atoms. Every where, and in every time, it will be seen that material substance declines the honor which atheism would force upon it, and confesses its subordination to a Supreme Intelligence who is One and Infinite. The same reason must be the judge of the manifestations of power, whether in nature or in any work of man; and must determine, on the same principles in either case, whether or no it be intelligent. Let skepticism argue as it may, it will find it difficult to evade the conviction, that the Power which has wrought so admirably and so wisely in the countless ages of the past, and still upholds its grand productions in the present, will continue to act with the same Wisdom in the future, and to include even the atheist himself within the sphere of His great designs.

2. Ridicule has attempted to weaken the force of the design argument, by inquiring whether we are to suppose every thing was

made for man; whether, for instance, Jupiter was created with its four moons, to give us the means, once so much sought, of determining the longitude. But it is not necessary to know the purpose of a human agent in all his actions, before we can conclude him to be intelligent in any. Nor is it necessary to search all the plans and purposes of Providence before we can appreciate the wonderful wisdom manifested in the great laws of nature, or in the lesser adaptations of physiology, such, for example, as are exhibited in the human eye. Without question, the argument may be misapplied. It must be so when it pretends to foretel the agency of the Creator, to dogmatize upon its outgoings in distant spheres, to search the "ways past finding out." It is possible and very common to misunderstand the purpose of a human agent; yet his purpose may nevertheless be in other instances unquestionable.

3. What, then, is the evidence of the material world respecting itself? The design argument has been successfully applied in every department of science. The evidences of intelligence superior to inert matter, are, for their number and variety, beyond all power of description. But to see their full force, it is necessary to consider them, not merely as isolated instances of wisdom, but all in their combination and concurrence as parts of one majestic plan. Whatever account may be given of the origin of organized and living beings—and it will not be easy to discredit the conclusion of the best geologists,[1] that each distinct species, no less than the beginning of matter itself, requires the admission of a new creative agency; but however this be, there can be little doubt that the material world, independently of its organized systems, has arrived at its present condition, probably from one much simpler, through a course of natural developments according to law. It has been sufficiently shown that, by the principles of knowledge, one of two things is necessary. Whatever the earth's primitive condition, it must either have contained in itself the causes of all future changes —and then we need a Supreme Intelligence to account for the original properties of matter, and all their relations to one another— or these causes must have lain in the continued agency of a Superior Being. A theory of creation by law can no more dispense

[1] See Buckland's Bridgewater Treatise, chap. vi.

with a creative intelligence than a theory which affirms the world to have been instantaneously created by an Almighty Fiat.

4. Whatever hypothesis may be adopted respecting the commencement of the universe, its Astronomical order must be referred to One intelligent Cause. The solar system bears numerous testimonies to the Unity and Wisdom of the Creator; the stellar universe, all but infinite, to His Immensity. To instance some of the arrangements of the solar system. It consists of two kinds of material bodies, one of them dependent on the other for its light and heat. It is happily ordered that the great body, which is the centre of stability to the system, is also the source of light and heat to all the planets.

The motions of the bodies also afford remarkable instances of order, which would need to be ascribed to an Intelligent Disposer, though the world itself were stripped of its garment of designs. In considering the movements of the universe, we may suppose the sun and planets to consist of but one chemical substance; they may be solid globes of gold, for instance, revolving in space; and their order and stability afford striking evidences of Wise Purpose. The masses are kept in their abiding order by the universal force of attraction. Every body attracts every other, with a force which increases in proportion to the mass of the attracting body, and diminishes in a duplicate ratio as the distance increases. The attracting force of the central body would be doubled, if its matter were doubled; and, while it remains the same, its force diminishes with the distance of the body attracted, in the same proportion as the intensity of the light is diminished the farther you recede from the luminous body.

It was the great achievement of Sir Isaac Newton to account for all the motions of the solar system, and even the fall of bodies at the earth's surface, by means of this simple law of attraction. But he showed that many different orbits are possible under the same law, and that one will be determined rather than another by the *initial* circumstances of motion.

If we consider only two bodies, they will revolve about their common centre of gravity, each attracting the other; and if they be not very unequal in magnitude, the result will be what is seen

in systems of double stars, which both revolve about some point between them in space. But in the case of the solar system, we have one self-luminous body, far exceeding the magnitude of all the others combined. The diameter of the sun is ten times as great as Jupiter's, and Jupiter's more than ten times that of the earth. Hence if their densities were the same, the mass of the sun would be a thousand times that of Jupiter, and more than a million—in fact, it is thirteen hundred thousand times—that of the earth. To form a conception of its magnitude, we may suppose its centre to be placed in the position of the earth's centre; and its circumference will then lie at a distance, on all sides, nearly *twice* as great as the distance of the moon from the earth.[1] Its diameter is nearly *four* times as long as the diameter of the moon's orbit. Its magnitude is six hundred times as great as that of all the planets combined. The result is that the sun moves within such narrow limits, that we may consider the planets as all moving about a fixed central body.

But they may move under very different circumstances. Under the same central force, they may describe circles, or ellipses, and these may be of greater or less eccentricity, or may run into parabolas or hyperbolas. The initial circumstances of motion must have determined whether they shall move perpetually at nearly constant distances from the sun; or, like some of the comets, shall describe curves approaching at one point close to the sun, and then sweeping off to immense distances in the depths of space; or whether they shall be drawn no more than once toward the central body, and shall then be carried off in parabolic or hyperbolic orbits, never to return. In the latter cases there would have been an end of the system at once.

If they had been so projected at first, as to begin describing elongated ovals, their movements might have continued for many ages; but orbits of this kind would evidently have been incompatible with all known conditions of animal or vegetable life. To be adapted to these conditions, their distances must vary within narrow limits. Their orbits must be not far from circular, and such they are found to be in nature. None but the ignorant can

[1] This illustration is, I believe, Sir John Herschel's.

imagine the system to have been established as it is by chance. There may have been a prior cause in the cosmogony, which determined that each of the planets should begin to move in an orbit nearly circular, in preference to any of the infinite number of elliptical or other orbits, which were possible. But whatever may be the extension of science, whatever knowledge may be gained of the cosmogony, it may be seen beforehand that the arrangement can never be accounted for by any properties of material substances, but must have its Cause, which will be found at last, where it was placed at first, in the agency of an Intelligent Being, who passed by innumerable forms of disorder, and established the one form of order which was requisite.

5. Granted, then, that the orbits of the planets are not very elongated ellipses, and must continue for a long time as they are: the question still remains—Will it be always thus? Does the system possess stability? To show that it does, was the achievement of the great mathematicians who succeeded Newton; and the demonstration has not been effected but through their combined researches, and by means of an intricate and refined analysis. Not only are the planets held in their orbits by the attraction of the sun, they also attract one another, and are constantly drawing one another from their positions. Their real motion becomes by this means exceedingly complicated. But it is easy to understand that the effect might have been a continual, though slow, alteration of the orbits; which at length, after the lapse of ages, would have put an end to the stability of the system. The great lunar and planetary inequalities arising from these disturbances have been determined with extreme accuracy; and some of them are found to go on increasing for many thousands of years, and then at length to attain their maximum and to decrease. Thus Jupiter and Saturn are subject to a periodic variation of their eccentricities, of which the period is upward of seventy thousand years.[1] But it is found that this and the other inequalities are always confined within narrow limits; and consequently the system is stable. This stability, however, is the result of certain conditions in the first constitution of things. It is insured by the fact that the

[1] Pratt's Mechanical Philosophy, § 385.

planets all revolve *in the same direction* round the sun.[1] It would not have subsisted, unless the eccentricities of their orbits had been small. And it is remarkable, not only that this condition is fulfilled, but that the stability would have been compatible with larger eccentricities, in the cases of smaller than of larger planets; and that this condition also is fulfilled. The minute asteroids have the most eccentric orbits; Mercury's is more so than Jupiter's, while the comets, which are mere gaseous bodies, and produce no perceptible effect upon the planetary motions, move in the most eccentric and various orbits and do no harm. Here again the primitive causes of order may be found in a system of cosmogony. And in the search for such a system, this correspondence between the orbits and the magnitudes of the bodies is probably a fact to be taken account of.

In this view, the *position* of the asteroids may also, perhaps, be of importance. They occupy the middle place of the solar system, in the order of distance from the sun. And it is remarkable that the planets nearer to the sun than the asteroids, differ in several particulars from the more distant. They are much smaller, more dense, and all revolve about their axes in twenty-four hours; while the exterior and larger planets revolve in shorter periods. These two sets of planets, then, are separated from one another by a large number of small bodies, and probably many minute fragments, revolving at nearly the same distance from the sun at which, according to Bode's law, another planet was to be expected. This fact may bear some relation to the conjectured explosion of a larger planet, or an unknown event in the cosmogony, which gave rise to the formation of several minute bodies between Mars and Jupiter, instead of one large planet. At all events, it would appear to be a fact to be kept in view, in any attempt to connect the positions, movements, and what is known of the constitutions of the moon and planets, in a system of creation by law.

But suppose the causes of order have been found in such a system. Will it follow that they are in dead matter? Or shall we

[1] Had they moved in opposite directions, the stability would have been possible only under very special circumstances. Pratt's Mechanical Philosophy, § 385.

not want a Living Cause of the cosmogony itself? At least, if atheism be possible; if a man can imagine that there is no Infinite Intelligence prior to the movements of the universe; he must admit that these are as regular and well-ordered as if there were. Infinite Intelligence could not have more skillfully directed them. If any be content to think matter his god, it will still be prudent to consider, whether it may not be expected, in endless ages to come, to deal as wisely with himself.

6. In considering the stability of the universe, we have supposed the moving bodies to be of one simple substance. But the aspect of the world shows marks of intelligence far more varied and numerous. Natural theology must here call in the aid of chemical science, which furnishes evidences of Mind prior in existence to matter, not only as the Director of its movements, but as the Ordainer of all the properties by which material substance is known to the mind of man.

Suppose it were necessary, for the accommodation of living beings, that the world should consist of at least two substances. Suppose, for instance, that it must contain a solid and a fluid substance. It is manifest that they must have some relation to one another. If the globe be of gold, the fluid substance must not be mercury; for the result will presently be an amalgam, and the fluid is lost. Very many such relations were to be taken account of, and many conditions to be fulfilled, in the formation of a world of fifty or sixty simples, bearing certain chemical affinities to one another, and all exposed to the high temperature of the early geological period. Accident may throw together various substances in one blast furnace; but it needs a skillful artificer to combine them, and to mould them to a beautiful form. But any such illustration falls infinitely short of the case before us. We have seen already, that a theory of materialism leads us, whether we will or no, to a multitude of independently-existing atoms or forces, each possessing its own peculiar properties. If the atheist deny the reasonable conclusion, that all existence in space and time implies existence superior to these conditions, he must maintain that some substance has existed eternally, under those conditions which bring it within the reach of man's senses. But the

world of experience is known as a world of diversity. First of all, then, it is reasonable, from the irreducible diversities we behold, to conclude that the distinct species of matter might have been varied, not merely in a few, nor in many, but in an infinite number of ways. Instead of fifty or sixty simples, might we not have had as many millions? Might not every atom have been endowed with a repulsion to all the rest? When the atheist tells us—"Of the various possible forms which a world of matter may assume, you see the one which is," he starts with the unfounded hypothesis, that the few substances of this world are all which are or can be.

7. But this is not all. Suppose the number of simples to lie in the eternal necessity of material existence, it still remains that for one form of order we may have an infinite number of forms of confusion. Consider, for example, the particles of dust which the sunshine discovers to be floating in the room, and with the single reference to arrangement. Let us suppose the same particles to be suspended for ages in any given number of cubic feet of air, and to float with every accidental motion of the fluid which supports them. There is no reason, in the nature of things, why they should not, in the course of time, fall into every possible arrangement; but what is the chance of their ever marshaling themselves to form the surface of some regular geometrical figure? Something so infinitely small, that we can readily believe it would not happen to all eternity. But what, if, instead of the particles which fill a room, we take as many atoms as form the world; and if, instead of considering them with reference only to arrangement, we suppose each atom to possess peculiar properties of its own, and to have certain determinate relations to all the rest—what then is the chance that the particles will be such in their properties, as at any time to combine in a form of order, or ever to give any thing but a chaos? If endless varieties of atoms may exist, and we have first to take the chance of having only a few varieties, bearing such and such chemical relations to one another, the chances against order are manifestly infinite. And if it be granted that the world contains *all possible varieties* of substances, we have still an inconceivable number of conditions to be satisfied, in the

constitution of the atoms, and the quantity of each, if not for the formation of one mass, at least for that of a globe similar in its order and arrangement to this of ours; and want besides One Cause of their combination when we have obtained them. For there is room enough for atoms to roam about in the infinite space, without their troubling themselves to work together for one purpose, and to meet harmoniously in a little globe. Finite minds are less happy in their co-operation. The calculation of the chances, where there is no mind to order them, must deal with figures so immense, that the numbers of the stars, and the distances of the most distant, sink into insignificance before them.

Of the substances which chemistry recognizes as simple, some are gases, a few liquids, and, at ordinary temperatures, the greater number are solids. Some occur in great abundance, others are comparatively rare at the earth's surface. Of the gases, oxygen enters largely into the composition of the most common substances in nature. It is a chief constituent of air, of water, and of the substances which form the rocks and soils of the earth's surface. Suppose, then, the requisite elements to have been given for the constitution of the world; yet might not chlorine gas have been as abundant as oxygen, and oxygen even rarer than chlorine? It is difficult to conceive what would have been the result; possibly a mere chaos, certainly not a world adapted to any known forms of animal or vegetable life. Or the oxygen might have been in sufficient abundance for the earths, and have left nothing behind to combine with hydrogen or nitrogen in the waters and atmosphere. Again, is it a happy chance that the elements were given in their due proportions? If it were a necessity of nature, then at least this necessity is such as we might expect an Infinite Intelligence to have produced. It would seem that prior to all the properties by which alone matter is known to man, a Superior Power must have existed to order and combine them in such connection with one another as would evolve this world of earth, air, and water, which is fit to be the residence of mankind. And this is tantamount to affirming it prior in existence, and the Creator of all that can be known as material by the mind of man.[1]

[1] This argument was used, I find, in the time of Origen. (Princ. iv. 34.)

8. But suppose the simple bodies to have been given in their due proportions, as well as in their various kinds, how many further conditions were to be fulfilled for the composition of a world adapted to systems of organized beings. If all its atoms were now jumbled together in a chaos, what an infinity of circumstances must concur to bring it back to its present order. The geological, as well as the astronomical phenomena, may perhaps be combined in a scientific system of cosmogony; but the chemical, as well as the physical causes, will need to be referred to an Intelligent First Cause. Suppose the earth to have been already formed as a globe of molten matter; and at length, by the slow radiation of its heat during a long period, to have been encompassed with a solid crust. All the waters would, for a long time, be suspended in the atmosphere, and would surround the earth with a dense nebula of fog. During a subsequent period there would be a perpetual flooding rain of hot water, which would be immediately evaporated and would reascend. These fierce agencies of change would commence the disintegration of the primitive, and the formation of the stratified rocks. The same changes, in combination with forces arising from the contraction of the earth's crust, might give rise to the earthquakes and volcanoes which were so necessary for bringing the world into a habitable condition. By means of these mountain chains would be thrown up and plains elevated above the valleys, and it would thus become possible for the waters of the sea to be gathered together into one place, and the dry land to appear above the waters.

Here, again, it can not but be remarked that nature has been most happy in the results even of those agencies of change which are regarded as most irregular. The earthquake, the volcano, and the flood have played important parts in preparing the dry land and the soils for the vegetable world, and all for the sustentation of the animal tribes. But by what happy accident was it arranged that, when the chasms of the earth had been formed, the sea, which claims so large a portion of the surface, was not sufficient to cover its great continents? Double the quantity of water would probably have hidden it to the mountain tops. It is another happy result of natural causes and convulsions that the

mineral systems were disseminated, and the carboniferous systems spread out within the earth; and then the rocks, which once lay level, were broken and thrown into inclined positions, and rendered accessible to the intelligent beings who were afterward to find the deposits so essential to the comforts and the arts of life. We may imagine that many different results might have been determined by slight changes in the original conditions of things. It is impossible to enumerate more than a few of the instances in which the world has been ordered and prepared for the habitation of man; but it may easily be seen that, as, in the astronomical arrangements, an infinite number of orbits might have been given to the planets, which would have sent them careering in empty space, for one which has retained them through a thousand ages in their stability; so, for one combination of chemical and physical causes in the cosmogony which could furnish a world adapted to living beings, myriads might have been chosen which would have left it forever in a state of chaos.

One of the most remarkable instances of Creative wisdom is shown in the maximum density of water. Like almost all other bodies, fluid and solid, it contracts as it cools; and, consequently, as the cold of winter continues, the upper film of all lakes and rivers becomes heavier than the body of water beneath it, and is continually descending from the surface, till the whole mass is cooled down to a certain point. So that the deeper the water, the longer it is in freezing—a point upon which Dr. Johnson was skeptical when he made his tour to the Hebrides. If this process continued, the whole depth of the water would at length be cooled down to the freezing point, and lakes and rivers would, in severe winters, be converted into solid masses of ice.

But, by a wise and beneficent arrangement of nature, water is here an exception to the laws of most substances. Within a few degrees of the freezing point it gains a maximum density, and instead of continuing to contract and become heavier as it cools, it begins to expand and grow lighter. After this the coldest water remains at the surface till it freezes, and forms a warm covering to the rest during the continuance of the frost.

There is here wisdom of design surpassing human understanding.

And a scheme of creation by law only enlarges the conception of wise purpose. The original gases of creation must have been so constituted, when the heat of the earth was so intense that no water could exist, as afterward to give rise to this substance which is in so many ways essential to living beings, and possesses among its properties the unknown quality of its constitution, on which its law of contraction depends.

9. Suppose, then, the primeval substances of nature to have contained the causes of all the changes and progressions which have formed this world of rocks and soils, of water and air; we may next observe the admirable system of meteorological laws on which the vegetable world is so dependent. To appreciate the evidences of design manifested in the atmosphere and the weather, we must consider them in relation to the animal and vegetable kingdoms. The atmosphere is essential to the respiration, without which no individual of either kingdom can prolong its life. It furnishes oxygen to animals, carbon to vegetables. Had it been constituted of other gases, neither kingdom could have existed. But suppose the primeval causes to have been happily such as must have formed it of its present constituent gases, we have still to search among those causes for other causes of the properties and relations of air and water, and of all the movements of the atmosphere, which have given rise to the present meteorological system of the globe. The atmosphere is the vehicle for the conveyance of water from the ocean to the land. For the earth to receive its supply of rain, it is necessary that the water rise in vapor from the ocean as well as from the land, be diffused over the surface of the continents, and again descend from the atmosphere in its liquid condition. The tendency of water to constant evaporation supplies the air with moisture. The variations of temperature and of electrical condition again condense the vapor, and precipitate it in the form of rain or dew. We can not conceive the intelligence which could have devised a more admirable system than that which is silently but perpetually drawing up the waters from the ocean, to let them fall as silently in the gentle dew of evening in places far from the sea, where they are so essential for the nourishment of vegetables, and thus indirectly to animal life.

The movements of the air, by which the transference is effected, are to be ascribed in part to causes already indicated—the annual and diurnal motions of the earth. But other causes are not less important; in particular, the atmospheric currents, which depend upon the natural property of the air to be expanded by heat.

10. Let us consider, then, some of the causes and occasions which must concur—and, it seems, the distinct systems of causes, reaching to the sun in distance, and going back through thousands of ages for their commencement—which must conspire together for the growth of a single flower. The soil has been formed in the course of the long changes of geology. The sun furnishes the heat, which develops the vital properties of the plant, and the light, whence it derives its colors. The atmosphere supplies it with carbon, and brings the moisture from the ocean, and sends down along with it some of the ammonia, which it has received from the decay of previous plants and animals. It is possible that the origin of these great systems may be traced backward to one course of cosmogony. The geological changes which have produced the soil, may have arisen in the same primitive state of things which gave existence to the atmosphere, the ocean, and perhaps even the earth itself, as a planet revolving round the sun. Possibly all the great movements of air and water may have been continued from the original movements of matter. But if it be so, there are several systems of primitive causes wholly distinct from one another; and of which some, as far as we can know, might have been originated without the rest.

11. We might similarly advert to the relations of these great systems to the animal kingdom, and to the dependence of this upon the vegetable kingdom. It is here the leading fact, that no animal can form for itself the albumen, and similar substances, which are the constituent matter of its tissues. One animal may derive these substances from another; but they are produced in the vegetable world alone. If this, then, were to perish, the other also must soon cease to exist.

For one of many instances of the adaptation of the outward world to man, we may consider the organ of sight. What wondrous mechanism of vital forces is called into action in the human

frame, for the formation and exact disposal of the retina, the humors, and all the muscles and glands of the eye. Its construction has been admirably described by many writers;[1] and if no other example were considered, this alone, whatever attempts may have been made, remains an unanswered and an unanswerable evidence of a Creative Intelligence immeasurably superior to any intelligence of man. And it is not to be considered merely by itself. It stands in its relations to the grand cosmical arrangements. The sun is the main source of its light, which is supplied through some unfailing and stupendous natural process. Or if the eye make use of artificial light, it is indebted to the oxygen of the atmosphere. Nor is this the only use of the atmosphere to the eye. It is the medium for the diffusion of the sun's rays, and the production of what we call daylight. Without it the whole sky would be intensely dark, except in the direction of the heavenly bodies; and we might pass from the blaze of sunshine to total darkness between one side of a large building and the other.

All these instances of universal order bear upon the question from which we commenced: Is not mind prior in existence to matter? All concur in the answer which was given by the chemical relations of substances; and discover that as matter is posterior to intelligence in the possession of all the properties by which it can be known, so, in all its combinations and applications, it has been directed and governed by the same Intelligence which gave it being. Again we may repeat, if any can imagine there is not sufficient evidence of an Infinite Mind superior to the world, let him consider whether, as far as man can see, the world, in its universal order, and its least adaptations, in its innumerable designs and complexities, be not formed and arranged as if there were. Reason requires, in all these adaptations, an adequate cause of order, and of the very possibility of order. It finds one in a Supreme Being, who with wise Intelligence selected and appointed, and by His Power, acting mediately or immediately—by direct agency, or indirectly through an established system of laws —communicated the various properties which we see the parts of matter to possess, brought them together in their due proportions,

[1] Paley, for instance.

and adjusted them to the construction of the complicated scheme of nature.

We might farther allude to the adaptation of the external world, to the moral and intellectual constitution of man; and have already dwelt upon those relations of mind and matter, by which the mind is developed into active life, and comes into possession of its faculties of perception and thought. This last instance especially forces us to the conclusion, that the distinct worlds of mind and matter are derived from one and the same First Cause.

12. There is yet another question which should not be altogether passed over in this place; that of the origin of life in the vegetable and animal worlds. We have briefly glanced at the conditions, under which the life of any individual is continued when it has commenced; but there are striking evidences of Divine Power and Intelligence in its commencement. To say nothing of the question of transmutation, or of the commencement of any species in the material world, we may observe such instances in the case of every individual of any species. For the origin of each is as completely lost in the mystery of minuteness as that of species. We may suppose, if we will, that the future stem and leaves and flowers are all wrapped up in a minute form within the seed; but shall we think, with Malebranche,[1] that the seed of any plant we commit to the ground contains within it the seeds of the next season, and each of these those of the following, and so on to endless generations? The atheist delights in infinite chains: will he be disposed to apply his theory in this case, and to hold that an infinite number of the plants of all future seasons to eternity, are inclosed within the minute particle which he can scarcely distinguish from a grain of sand? Why, even this supposition puts an end to the all-sufficiency of matter. A single step carries us beyond all its known or conceivable properties. Or shall we assign to each individual the powers of drawing from nature the requisite materials, and disposing them in the exact order for the formation of the particular particles which will reproduce its kind, and no other? Marvelous then,

[1] "Il ne paraît pas même déraissonable de penser qu'il y a des arbres infinis dans un seul germe." Recherche, vi. i.

however common, are the powers and properties of every organized being. Are these powers to be included among material properties? It may be answered, perhaps, that we can reach but a little way into the mystery of minuteness, and must impose a limit to our curiosity. But is there no intelligence to reach farther than our own? Does this wonderful being, or class of beings—this material substance, carry on its recondite processes, as if it were the Most Intelligent of all, and produce results, such as we should conceive the Most Intelligent would originate, and so vail its procedure in obscurity, that no mind can trace it farther than the mind of man?

Every tree which adorns the landscape comes forth from the mystery of minuteness, and contains this mystery within itself. Each possesses a certain appearance, an elegant form, a particular color of its foliage, and shape of its single leaf. But in what does the trunk of the living tree differ from the dead trunk which is still held up by its roots? In what does the oak differ so permanently from every other kind? There is something assuredly which causes its vitality, something which makes it to differ, and that something has been derived from the acorn, which is so simple to all appearance. What eye can discern the secret property? What microscope can discover it? Perhaps, at last, what human mind could understand it?

13. It is possible that geology may carry back the origin of the material world to a similar mystery of minuteness. When we have read the indubitable tale of countless ages, and have been carried back through periods of slow progression, and over epochs of sudden catastrophe, to a globe of fire, we are left inquiring whether the fused matter had been vapor; and if it had, whence then this vapor, and what the principles, if they were immanent therein, which have evolved all the changes of its state? What the causes of sudden revolutions, interrupting the settled order of things? Were these the results of causes already resident in the primeval matter, or were they effected by extraneous agency? We might go on to ask whether the present order of things will also come to an end, and give place to other scenes, and new forms and varieties of living beings; and may easily see that, for

an answer, it will be necessary to descend deeper than will ever be possible to human power, into the present nature of material existence.

14. The same mystery of minuteness, unsearchable by eye or microscope, hangs over the commencement of human life. The microscope may go a few steps beyond the eye, but it can not search the depths of being. The mystery remains as unapproachable as at first.

But is there no single instance in the universe in which the mind is able to look beyond this mystery of minuteness, into which material existence may be seen to run in every direction? Yes; there is one such instance to every organized being who possesses intelligence; one and one only; but in this one he may find perhaps the solution of the deep problem. Let him study the channels of communication between the brain and the extremities of the nervous organism; let him examine with the best of microscopes the nervous fibres, or the retina of the eye; let him attend to the physical actions of the waves of light or sound upon the eye or ear, and try to discover their exact effect upon the nerves. Here again he is soon lost in the mystery of minuteness. It baffles the utmost skill of art or science to search the intricacies of the nervous constitution; much more to comprehend its movements, and the means of producing perception, or receiving the mandates of the will. But though his powers of observation are soon eluded, he can here look beyond observation. He can discover that the physical causes pass through this deep mystery, and produce the impressions of sensibility, or come forth from it, when the will determines, and give rise to motion in the world. He can not run through the whole course from mind to matter; he has organs of sense to perceive the one, and an inward consciousness to observe the other; but he has not the requisite organ or power for following the communication throughout. Yet he can see notwithstanding that there is a communication. He can see that physical actions give rise to sensibility, and that the will gives rise to physical movements in the world. He can see that beyond the mystery of minuteness, in the only instance in which he can look beyond it, *there is mind.*

We have here, then, an analogical argument, but one, it may be, of great weight. We see every where instances of stupendous power in nature; but when we try to search it, in any particular direction, to its source, we are always carried to something too minute to be followed any farther. Every living being, every living tree or flower, perhaps even the world itself, has issued forth from this mystery to its development. Nay, we are involved in a similar mystery, if we attempt to account for the present existence of the simplest particle of material substance. Is it not more than a probable conclusion that mind here also lies beyond the mystery, and that the powers of nature are perpetually issuing forth according to the mandates of a Living Will? This inference is analogical. But the inference of Intelligence from design; the conclusion that, in some way, and by some means, Intelligence directs and orders all things, is not one of analogy but of causality.

15. Thus far, then, on the Wisdom of the Creator as manifested in nature. His Immensity and Unity may be inferred from the immensity and unity of Creation. The First Cause exceeds the vastness of the universe, and this to man is tantamount to infinity. Man and nature are finite; but both stretch toward the infinite—man, both in the unavoidable results of his first principles of reason and in the natural feelings and aspirations of his soul; nature, in her illimitable vastness as much as in her unsearchable minuteness. If the microscope can carry us but a little way in exploring the mystery of the world beneath us, the telescope is equally incompetent to search the vast spaces above. If we suppose the microscope to have discovered in the monad the smallest and most elementary form of a living being, and the telescope to have revealed the most distant star or nebula, yet in the one case, as in the other, the limits of knowledge lie far within the circle of being. The questions remain, What is this principle of life which distinguishes the monad from the speck of dust? What is the nature of the nebula; or, if it be a system of suns, what are the first principles of material being? what the unlimited space which holds the universe?

As far, however, as observation can carry us, external nature

furnishes abundant evidence of the unity and immensity of the Creator; evidence which may fail indeed—for what will not?—to repress the audacity of skepticism, yet sufficient to satisfy the reasonable, such as the finite can afford to the Infinite; that is, such as is possible in the nature of things.

This evidence consists in the immensity of space and of material being, and in the continued unity of the globe through the long periods of the past. Astronomy discovers the unity and immensity of the Supreme Being in space, or beyond it; geology, in time, or beyond it; chemistry, in the reality of all present conditioned existence, or beyond it.

16. Astronomy has taught us to look into the depths of space from star to star, and from system to system, through distances all but infinite. Compared with the immense fields of the stellar universe, the solar system sinks into an infinitesimal speck. The immense distances and enormous magnitudes of the stars are beyond question. It has long been known that they must be situated at distances from the earth vastly greater than any measures of the solar system. It had been ascertained that the nearest of them can not be less than twenty millions of millions of miles from us, a distance which is traveled by light in not less than three years. Yet light passes over 192,000 miles in a second of time, and from the sun to the earth in eight minutes. So that the nearest of the fixed stars is seen by light which set off on its journey three years ago; and the more distant may have been thousands of years extinct, and may still be visible in our sky by the light they formerly emitted. Of late years an approximation has been made to the actual distances of some of the stars. It can not be said that any one determination of this element could be relied upon, if it stood alone. The angles on which the measurement depends, although they are the angles of triangles erected on the diameter of the earth's orbit, that is, on nearly two hundred millions of miles, are yet found to be so extremely minute, that it is impossible to separate them from the small unavoidable errors of instruments and of observation. It is only by the agreement of numerous results that numbers have been obtained which can be regarded as approximate values of any of the

stellar distances.[1] But that the least of these values is enormous, has long been known with certainty.

From this fact it has been shown, by means of observations of the comparative brightness of the sun and stars, that many of these bodies—Sirius, for instance—have an intrinsic splendor far surpassing that of the sun, and are therefore probably of far greater magnitude. In the case of some of the binary systems, the masses of the systems have been ascertained to be on the same scale of magnitude with that of the sun. To call the stars suns involves therefore no arbitrary assumption. It has been shown also by means of the double stars, that the law of attraction extends to the distant systems of the universe.

17. Yet it is more than probable that beyond this stellar system of ours, which forms the milky way and firmament of our sky, there are other stellar systems at so great distances from the eye as to occupy but very minute portions of our heavens. Many of the nebulæ present an appearance similar to that which would be assumed by the whole stellar system of our heavens if it were seen from a sufficient distance. It has perhaps been shown that this is not the character of all the nebulæ. Some of them probably are mere clouds of gaseous matter. They may perhaps be permanently such; or it is possible that some of them, as Laplace conjectured, may be the still diffused matter of future systems of suns. If they were all masses of stars like our heavens, they must all be vastly more distant than any of the stars, and the irresolvable more distant than the resolvable nebulæ. But from Sir John Herschel's observations of the clouds of Magellan—two very fine luminous nebulæ, well known to visitors of the southern hemisphere—this does not appear to be the case. The larger of these presents, he says, "a constitution of astonishing complexity." It abounds in "large patches and tracts of nebulosity in every stage of resolution," stars and clusters, nebulæ resolvable and irresolvable, and some of them "of a character quite peculiar."[2] And yet the apparent diameter of the whole mass is as much as 6°. If, then, its actual diameter be as long in depth as in breadth, it

[1] See a paper by Mr. Main, in the Transactions of the Royal Astronomical Society.

[2] Quoted in the Plurality of Worlds, chap. vii.

will follow that the distance between its more remote and nearer parts is something more than one-tenth of its distance from us.[1] To suppose the distance of its stars and clusters to be very small, in comparison of that of its nebulous matter, would therefore be a very improbable hypothesis.

But if some of the nebulæ be too near the earth to be considered stellar systems, it will not follow that the whole of them are mere clouds of luminous vapor. It is very probable, from other observations of nature, that there are the greatest diversities in their constitution. There are certainly great differences among the stars. We have stars single, double, and multiple; nebular, variable, and even occasional stars, which have become visible and soon died away. It is possible that some of the nebulæ may be luminous matter in connection with large stars, as perhaps the nebula in Orion with the multiple star; while others, as that in Hercules, may be distant systems of suns. "That by far the larger share of them consist of stars there can be little doubt." So wrote Sir John Herschel many years ago,[2] and this may still be true, notwithstanding his observations of the Magellanic clouds, or any other evidences to the contrary.

"In the interminable range of system upon system, and firmament upon firmament, which we thus catch a glimpse of, the imagination is bewildered and lost." Yet in these immensities of matter and of space we have evidences of the same unity in diversity which is every where manifest in the world. Astronomy bears testimony with the world in which we live, that "there are diversities of operation, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."

18. The discoveries of Geology terminate in the same conclusion. We pass through long periods of progress, and over sudden changes and catastrophes; but all, after ages of ages, are found to have evolved harmonious results. The very convulsions of the earth were among the steps most essential in its preparation for man.

[1] It may be seen, by an easy calculation, or by constructing a figure, that a line subtending an angle of 6°, must lie at a distance from the eye of something less than one-tenth of its length.

[2] Astron., Lardner's Cycl., § 625.

The inference is confirmed by the remains of former animal and vegetable kingdoms. Many varieties are met with, far more of extinct than of existing species. But they are all members of one great system of creation. They are bound to one another in similar relations, with the different systems now existing in the world, and are always adapted to the constitution of the globe at the time of their existence. Chemical science bears a similar testimony. On its numerous diversities, and the constant unity in diversity, it is unnecessary to speak farther.

This, then, is the testimony of the material world, in whatever direction we may look. In its magnitude, and in its minuteness, in the distant causes of the past, and in the deep causes of the present, it stretches from the finite toward the Infinite, and every where discovers itself to have been created and ordered by Intelligent Agency. Is not this, then, the Intelligence of a Being, One and Infinite? At least every thing is ordered as if it were, and this truth may be of practical moment. Reason goes farther, and affirms plainly that it is. The view of an Unwavering Omnipotence, an All-seeing Intelligence, an Infinite Wisdom of Purpose, in spaces so distant, in times so remote, in causes so deep, may carry on the expectations to the future. And if, in all the changes and convulsions of nature, no particle of matter has been lost, it is more than probable that that other being, which, in every act of perception, is revealed along with matter, and has an equal claim to be regarded as real—a being possessed of properties and powers, even more wonderful than any in the visible universe—whose thoughts, feelings, desires, stretch beyond the immensities of space, and time, and cause, to the Infinite, the Eternal, the Self-existent —that this being also must be imperishable.

CHAPTER III.

THE DIVINE WISDOM IS UNSEARCHABLE. THE PLURALITY OF WORLDS.

1. Inverse Question of final Causes.—2. Final Causes upon this Question.—3. Inapplicable Analogies.—4. Partial Resemblances to the Earth.—5. Have all Things their sufficient Purpose?—6. General Character of Creation.—7. Geological Argument.—8. Its Extent.—9. The Solar System.—10. Many Worlds: One Creator.—11. The Divine Infinity.

1. THE theological design argument infers an Intelligent Creator from the manifestations of Intelligent Agency in nature. It is by all means necessary, especially when atheists are bending their efforts to discredit the argument, to keep it distinct from an inverse problem of final causes. This is an attempt to deduce particular instances of design, unknown by any observation, from the known Intelligence of the Creator. From design to infer a designer, we have maintained to be strictly reasonable; but this is far short of any pretense to search the depths of the Divine Wisdom, and deduce His Agency where it is unknown. This Ixionic flight of reason must soon carry it beyond its sphere, and may be expected to terminate in a downfall. The theological argument makes no such pretenses, and is not disparaged by their result.

This inversion of the argument has recently been made prominent, in the inquiry respecting inhabitants of other worlds.[1] Some remarks upon it, in this view, may be useful; and may serve, at the same time, to illustrate and enlarge the conceptions of the Divine Unity and Immensity, suggested by the view of physical nature.

2. The question thus introduced may be stated to be this: Have we good reason to infer the existence of other intelligent races from the existence of other material worlds? This world of our own may be said, we have seen, to consist, in all knowl-

[1] Reference is made in this chapter to "The Plurality of Worlds, an Essay," and "More Worlds than One," by Sir David Brewster.

edge, of two worlds, that of mind and that of matter, wholly distinct, but bound together in some deep, though unknown, relation to one another. May we infer then, from the perception of the numerous large bodies of the firmament, that these also are tenanted by intelligent beings? This question has been answered from final causes. "If Jupiter has not been created like the earth to be the seat of animal and intellectual life, for what purpose could so gigantic a world have been framed?" "Why does the sun give it days and nights and years? Why do its moons throw their silver light upon its continents and seas? Why do its equatorial breezes blow perpetually over its plains, unless to supply the wants, and administer to the happiness of living beings?" To all such questions it appears to be a legitimate answer that *we do not know*, and that it is not necessary we should.

The theological argument is founded upon the adaptation of means to ends, when both the means and the end are before our eyes. When we see innumerable combinations and adaptations of things, conspiring to some good end, we can not but recognize the marks of wise design, and must acknowledge the Hand of a Beneficent Author of nature. But even in this case we should often be mistaken, if we inferred that in any single instance of design we perceived the whole purpose of the Almighty. The powers of nature are so numerous and interwoven, their effects so various, their operations so complex, and so far hidden from observation, in the deep and silent laboratory of God, that we can have no more than a very partial knowledge of any of His ways. As many causes may combine to one end, so each of these causes may be conducive, at the same time, to other ends. Thus the air, for example, is not only fit for the respiration of animals and plants; it supports the birds in their flight; it bears up the clouds above the earth; it sustains and carries in its currents the watery vapor which is to nourish the earth; it is instrumental in the production of fire, and in the diffusion of the sun's rays in daylight and twilight; it is the reservoir of gases given off in the decay of former animals and plants; and, in addition to all, it is the common medium of sound. We should be mistaken if we supposed any one of these to be the final cause in the creation of

the atmosphere, without the others; or all the purposes we know, to exhaust the design of the Creator. Again, the sun gives us light and heat, and fulfills, by means of them, innumerable purposes which are essential to the life of man; but we can not conclude that we have discovered the whole purpose of its creation.

We are still more liable to error when we attempt to assign the purpose, because some part of nature appears to be sufficient for it, when we have no experience of its application to this end. Final causes are a sound foundation for inductive inference respecting the nature and character of a designer, human or divine; they can not be applied deductively, to furnish increased knowledge of his operation, where it is unknown. Nor, if we find a work of creation does not answer some purpose which we expected, can we be justified in concluding that it serves no end whatever. If any one were satisfied to reflect that the larger planets with their moons and rings, though they be destitute of inhabitants, are at least "vast scenes of God's presence, and of the activity with which He carries into effect every where the laws of nature;" if one can be content to know "that the vulgar eye is delighted with the sight of planets made gorgeous by the telescope, that astronomers are entranced with the study of their movements and their perturbations, and that the useful art of navigation derives some advantage from the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites," yet he can not conclude that he knows the purposes of their existence. And, on the other hand, if he fail to discover "the grandeur, the utility, the beauty, the poetry, of the two almost invisible stars which usurp the celestial names of Uranus and Neptune, and which have been seen by none but a very few even of the cultivators of astronomy," yet may he not infer, that "they are doubtless the abodes of life and intelligence, the colossal temples whence their Creator is recognized and worshiped, the remotest watch-towers of our system, from which His works may be better studied, and His glories more easily descried."

Observations of this kind are founded upon the supposition that we are under the necessity of either finding the Divine Purpose in the existence of the distant planets, or of concluding that they are

without use or purpose in the creation. But there is a legitimate escape from the dilemma, in the truth of Scripture and common sense—"The ways of God are past finding out." We can never have more than a partial knowledge of His designs, or of the conditions under which creation is possible. Conditions, and relations, and possibilities of things, it is manifest there must be; whether they be regarded as resting in the nature and relations of created things, in their dependence upon the Creator, or in His holy Will or Nature. The assumption that they must be known by man is clearly inadmissible.

It is not difficult, perhaps, to frame conjectures which may be conceived to be solutions of the question; although, under the limitations of our knowledge, it is impossible to verify them. It is conceivable that the planets may have come into existence along with the earth, in one course of cosmogony. They may be productions of general laws, of which some only subserve a useful purpose. They may have carried off materials, before the formation of the earth, which were essential in the cosmogony, but would have been prejudicial to its future inhabitants had they remained. They may even now be necessary for maintaining that meteorological economy on which life is dependent. And they may serve many Wise Purposes of which we can know nothing. Whatever truth may belong to such conjectures, it is certain that the intention of the Creator, in any of His works, can never be more than partially known, possible that it may be wholly unknown.

3. To affirm the existence of universal life upon universal matter, is something very different from concluding that a kingdom must contain a king and subjects. These go to constitute the kingdom, so that the argument is a mere identical judgment. And it is very different from concluding that houses must have inhabitants, and railway-trains passengers. We know that houses are built for families, and railway-trains for passengers; and —though general rules may even here fail in particular cases— yet we are perfectly acquainted with the purposes of their construction. To affirm that we have the same reason for connecting universal life with universal matter, is to affirm that we know

the purpose for which worlds have been created—the very question in dispute.

Such arguments have as little weight on either side. One has been taken, on the other side, from the case of an inhabited island, having many other islands visible in the distance. It would be absurd, they say, if an inhabitant of the first island were to conclude, without farther evidence, that all the other islands are inhabited like his own. This illustration, it is answered, is unfair, because we know beforehand that "hundreds of islands are without inhabitants, and can assign a very good reason why they were made, and why they are not inhabited." In like manner we know beforehand that houses generally have inhabitants, and are built for this very purpose. We have no more reason to argue from inhabited houses or crowded railway-trains that there are intelligent inhabitants of other worlds, than from desolate islands that there are not. All such illustrations are inapplicable to the question.

4. Concerning inhabitants of other worlds, certain knowledge is unattainable, and dogmatism is out of place. The most probable conclusion, which can only be regarded as conjectural, is to be drawn by analogy from the operation of the Creator in this world of ours. But this analogical argument requires a very different statement from what it receives in passages which have been quoted from Dr. Lardner and Sir William Herschel. That the planets are in some particulars similar to the earth—that they are solid globes (some of them certainly are), revolve upon their axes, have, some of them, satellites—may furnish evidence that they are, so far, *adapted* for inhabitants. But they may fail in others of the innumerable conditions which are essential to any form of organized life; and if all were satisfied, it would not follow that they are inhabited.

The moon, for instance, is a solid globe; it has mountains and valleys, and may, in several particulars, resemble the earth; but in many others it is totally different. Common astronomical observations prove it to be almost, if not totally destitute of both air and water. Partial differences between the earth and them are, in general, as good evidence that other worlds are not inhabited,

as partial resemblances that they are. If we are to believe the moon inhabited because the earth serves it for a moon—a far larger, indeed, than it is to us—we have as good ground for concluding that it is inhabited only on one side, since the greater part of the other never sees the earth at all.

But the known differences in this case tell far more against inhabitants than the known resemblances in their favor. Air and water are essential to all forms of animal and vegetable life of which we have any knowledge; but it is not essential to them that there should be high mountains and deep valleys, nor any at all where there is no water, nor that a large luminary should adorn their nocturnal sky.

That a planet turns on its axis, that it has its days and nights, its summers and winters, its land, and sea, and atmosphere—such particulars do not extend to any *cause* of inhabitants, and can furnish an analogical argument of little value, in evidence of their existence in any particular case.

5. But the argument from analogy gains some weight for probable conclusions, when it is considered with reference to the First Cause of all things, and is applied to the general character of creation. In the defect of better evidence, it may be conjectured, with some probability, that the Universal Agency of the Creator will bear some general analogy to its manifestations in this little world.

The question arises then—Can we say that nothing has been made in vain, in this world of ours? Can we know that in the existence, not only of the various kinds and classes of things, but of every individual of every kind, there is a Divine Purpose which is invariably fulfilled? Many wise and pious men have clung to this opinion, and have endeavored to maintain that every individual is subservient to some useful end, though its end may often be unknown. And it is a sublime conception of Infinite Power, that every existing thing is as much its immediate product, and engages as closely its providential care, as though it were the sole result of Creative agency. But the opinion is attended with many difficulties. Wise and good men have been unable to extend the immediate agency of the Creator to all the subordinate results of

general laws.[1] Some Christians have believed, that while all things have proceeded originally from the Divine agency, and are still subject to an overruling Providence, yet that derangements and perversions of created agents are effected by intelligent powers of evil: an opinion which it would be as difficult to confute as the former.

But questions of this kind, however interesting, and however momentous in their import to man, soon run beyond the sphere of the understanding. It is enough here to observe that the admission of partial evils, or of an over-productiveness of natural laws has not appeared, to profound and pious writers, to be incompatible with a system of optimism, nor inconsistent with Infinite Wisdom. We may believe the universal creation to be the best possible, effected by the simplest possible means. There may be more economy of power in producing effects of nature by means of general laws, which involve much waste, than by any other means possible in the nature of things.

6. But whatever opinion may be received upon this difficult question, it is, at all events, certain of the world we live in, that many things exist which serve no useful purpose *discoverable by man;* and many which certainly do not effect the manifest purpose of their class. Innumerable individuals, in the animal and vegetable worlds, seem produced only to decay. Many seeds ripen but to rot; many animals die as soon as they are born, many even before they have begun to live. These instances can not be overlooked in the question of the general agency of the Creator.

[1] The question of general and particular determinations of the Divine Will is considered by Leibnitz in his "Théodicée," Part II. His opinion is (§ 206), "Dieu n'a aucune volonté sur les événemens individuels, qui ne soit une conséquence d'une vérité ou d'une volonté générale." And again (§ 211), "Je crois donc que Dieu peut suivre un plan simple, fécond, régulier; mais je ne crois pas que celui qui est le meilleur et le plus régulier soit toujours commode en même temps à toutes les créatures, et je le juge à posteriori; car celui que Dieu a choisi ne l'est pas." Hence his system is an optimism of the universe, not of each single part. Of all possible systems of creation, that which has been admitted to actual existence, is, with all its evils, the best and fairest within the eternal possibilities of things. This theory runs through all his writings, and is very beautifully illustrated in the story of Sextus, which concludes the Théodicée. How far satisfactory is another question.

ney make it evident that—even if the Divine laws be infinite in mprehensiveness with reference to all individuals, as well as in-nite in the extent of their application—there will still be no arrant for the doctrine of universal life upon universal matter. ; is a pious and a reasonable doctrine, that every single dispensa-on of Providence has its good and sufficient causes. It is also ossible that the first ordination of natural laws may have determ-ned, by sufficient causes, the existence of every individual, even f things which appear to man the most trivial and useless. The ed which rots may serve its purpose in the universe. But the ndividual does not, at all events, serve that purpose which is nown to man to be the common purpose of its kind.

The result is evident, if our conclusion upon the Universal gency of the Creator be deduced from His General Agency in ie world. If the stars lay, equally with the earth, within our here of observation, we might find in them similar instances of ie over-productiveness of natural laws. Worlds, as well as the sser productions of nature, may have come into being through neral laws, and may dissolve and disappear before they fulfill ie purpose which we regard as that of the world's existence. It ould seem, then, to be a probable conclusion, judging of the un-nown by what is known, that the whole material universe has s desolate rocks, and wastes, and oceans, as well as this world in hich we live. The islands may not all be peopled which are attered in the archipelago of immensity. Of the innumerable orlds above us, many, it is probable, fulfill the same end as our wn in the life of intelligent beings; while others serve, if any rpose at all, at least none which can be known to man.

7. This view is confirmed by an argument which has been tely advanced,[1] and which appears to be conclusive against uni-ersal intelligence in the universe of matter. It is certain that ie world existed many thousands, perhaps millions, of years be-re the commencement of the human race. Man is but a com-arative stranger upon the earth. He has been here but a few ears of many ages. Although the agencies of change must have een much more powerful and rapid during the early geological

[1] Plurality of Worlds, chap. vi.

epochs than they are at present; yet, when every allowance has been made, these epochs will still be immense. And in all the remains of these long ages there is no relic of human being, but the clearest evidences that the world was long unfit for his habitation.

Hence the argument of geology, in answer to rash conjectures from astronomy. The earth "has been occupied for myriads of years by the lowest, the least conscious forms of life; by shell-fish, corals, sponges," and therefore it is not improbable that "the seas and continents of other planets may be occupied at present with a life no higher than this, or with no life at all." "The intelligent part of creation is thrust into the compass of a few years in the course of myriads of ages; why not, then, into the compass of a few miles in the expanse of systems?" "If the earth was for ages a turbid mass of lava and of mud, why may not Mars or Saturn be so still?"

8. This argument appears to be conclusive against the notion, that all the material systems are now tenanted by intelligent beings. But neither this nor any other argument can be alleged to show that, of the innumerable orbs of space, this little world of ours is the only seat of life to reasonable and sensitive creatures. This universal negative is as improbable, to say the least, as the opposite universal affirmative is hasty and unsupported. The attempt to establish either conclusion as even probable, must go beyond the province of man. To discover the universal condition of the stars and planets, he must launch into the infinite depths which separate the creature from the Creator. All the evidence within his reach can sustain but a modest conjecture upon the general character of the creation.

9. There is, perhaps, but one body in the universe, besides the comets, the asteroids, and smaller meteoric stones (which may be left out of the account), on which it is possible to speak with any degree of certainty. There can be little doubt that the moon is unfit for the habitation of any organized animal, if it even afford the materials for its frame. And whatever varieties of being may be allowed, in the question of living inhabitants of other worlds, we must at least assume them to possess a delicate organization for the communication between mind and matter. It is not a

question of the existence of spirits, but of minds united to material frames, which must therefore possess the means of perceiving and acting upon the world without.

The absence of air and water, and consequently of a vegetable world, would appear to be conclusive against inhabitants of the moon: and these are not the only difficulties of the supposition.[1] Seen through large telescopes, it presents the appearance of a huge globe of stone, covered with innumerable craters of extinct volcanoes, and vast sheets of alluvial lava, and suggests, to the least imagination, an almost painful feeling of awful desolation.

It is impossible to speak with any certainty of the sun or planets; still less of any of the stars. But it is certain, from the little that is known of the physical condition of other bodies of the solar system, that inhabitants of the sun, or of the distant planets, if they exist at all, must possess organisms very different from that of man. Their corporeal frame and organs of sensation must be such, that "the feeling hearts which would find sympathy" in other worlds, might as well look for it in worlds of spirit as in material worlds so different from the earth. We may be tolerably sure that no communication could take place between the inhabitants of the earth and those of the sun or Neptune by means of their material organs.

The body which approaches nearest in physical condition to the earth, is the planet Mars. It possesses seas and continents, an atmosphere and clouds, and does not differ considerably from the earth in its light, its heat, or its gravitation. The white spots at its poles, which are said by Sir John Herschel to disappear when they have been long exposed to the sun, and to be greatest when just emerging from the long night of their polar winter, would seem to show that its torrid zone must be at least as warm as the temperate zone of the earth. These circumstances go far to prove that this planet is adapted to inhabitants little different in organization from mankind.

But whatever may be the probability of this opinion, there can be no reason to consider it inconsistent with the Divine Wisdom,

[1] Plurality of Worlds, chap. ix. Also Sir John Herschel's account of its physical constitution; Astron., chap. vi.

that the earth *may be* the only inhabited globe of the solar system. It has been conjectured that the planets may be essential to the economy of the earth—that "the solar system may be a machine acting for the benefit of the earth and its inhabitants." Yet it is equally possible, and consistent with the complex agency of the Creator, that the earth may, in the same way, be part of a machine acting for the benefit of Mars and its inhabitants.

Little need be said of the stars, and of any particular star little can be said to any purpose. Any one of them may or may not be attended by inhabited planets, may or may not be itself inhabited. But that, of the countless hosts of space, this little world alone is the home of rational beings—that all the rest are regions of desolation—is at least as improbable a conjecture, as that all are regions of life and thought. We may avoid the one exaggeration without falling into the other. The world has had, before this, abundant experience of the interminable controversies which arise from the common mistake of flying from one extreme to another, and defending both of them by errors and exaggerations.

10. The existence of many material worlds, with their various vegetable and animal kingdoms, is not inconsistent with the unity of creation. There may be many intelligent races, as well as many material systems, in the universe of One Creator. If it be thought reasonable or expedient to "clear off" the inhabitants of other systems, it is but a natural step beyond to clear off the systems themselves. But they are too many and too vast to be dispatched by a wild fancy, that "the distant stars may be sparks or fragments, struck off in the formation of the solar system"—"sparks which darted from the awful anvil of the Creator, when the solar system lay incandescent thereon." The unity of creation can not need to be supported on such a figment.

The innumerable stars and systems may possibly have originated in one cosmogony with the solar system; although it may exceed all human research to trace them back to their commencement. The proper motion of the sun in space, may be an indication of its relations to other parts of the universe. But whether or no, it can not be necessary that all material and mental exist-

ence should be comprehended in one progressive scheme, before we can acknowledge the Unity of the Creator; nor can we infer from the Unity of the Creator that His works must all have had their commencement in one Creative Act. Even in our own world, we have seen there is good reason to regard the commencement of the different species of organized beings as distinct from the commencement of the world itself, and independent of it. We may anticipate that other inhabited globes would furnish instances, like those on earth, of the resemblances and relations which connect beings of different orders and species with one another, and with the universe in which they live. Professor Owen states it as a probable conjecture, that "the conceivable modifications of the vertebrate archetype" which are not found in any of the species inhabiting the earth, may occur among the species of other worlds. Nor is this the only evidence of the unity of creation. All material worlds, with their denizens, exist in space. The minds of their inhabitants must therefore resemble man in the form of their intuition. And it is probable, from the similarity of their outward world as extended substance, and as illuminated by light similar to the sun's, that they have similar powers of perception, intelligence, and action. Many of them may be expected to be, in some sense, progressive beings,[1] although their intellectual history may vary in many ways, and may be totally different from that of the human race. And they must be bound in similar relations to the Creator. The law of right is Divine, and therefore superior to all worlds. It rests ultimately in the character of the Self-existent Being. It is binding upon all His rational creatures, in all time, and in all the spaces of the universe; of universal and eternal obligation. There is no greater improbability *a priori*, in the existence of many races of beings, bound in certain relations to that

[1] It has been thought "a great license of hypothesis" to believe in the existence of many progressive races, and much weight is laid upon this objection by "The Plurality of Worlds" (chap. iv.). The argument appears to be, that beings of a special character can not be assumed to exist in other worlds, because, if they do exist, they must have a special character. We know that intelligent as well as unintelligent animals do exist, and can have no reason to consider the repetition of the Divine agency in the creation of brutes more probable *a priori* than in that of rational beings.

Eternal Law—no greater improbability in the conscience of an inhabitant of Jupiter—than in that of beings bound in certain relations to space and time. Creative agency may be extended to the repetition of moral and intellectual forms of thought as well as of pure intuitions.

11. In the discussions of this question several mistakes appear to have arisen from defective conceptions of the Divine Immensity. Thus it is sometimes allowed that there is nothing derogatory to Infinite Wisdom in the waste of the seeds of plants, because some of each kind are subservient to reproduction; but that a single world is too great a waste in creation to be supposed. "The size of Jupiter alone," it has been said, "is a proof that it must have been made for some good and useful purpose." Acorns, in this philosophy, are estimated as trifles, but worlds are too great to be made for nothing. But a man would find it as difficult to create an acorn as to create a world: and a single star or planet can be no more than a grain of sand in the immensity of the visible universe; the universe itself no more in the Infinity of the Creator of all.

Objections to a cosmogony through second causes have the same foundation. Second causes are admitted in this little world; but the worlds themselves are too large to be a single step removed from the immediate Agency of the Creator. It is no disparagement of His Wisdom that we meet with monsters and abortions in the world; but a theory which admits abortive worlds is stigmatized as replete with danger. Plants may fail in the making, but not planets. But can it be more irreverent to suppose a planet may have "failed in the making," and given rise to the numerous asteroids, than to suppose one of them to have been burst in fragments after it was made? To speak of bits of planets which have failed in the making, may, in the present state of knowledge, appear to many an objectionable expression, but not to one who is accustomed to think of a cosmogony through second causes. It can mean no more than that such fragments are exceptional to the usual course of nature. We have too limited a view of the Divine Operation, and too slight knowledge of the conditions of creation, to be competent to pronounce any appar-

ent failure of its ordinary processes, a blemish on the works of the Almighty.

It appears also to admit of question, whether all the speculations on this subject have not originated in the same defective conceptions of the Infinite. And, to speak with deference, would not this have been a sufficient answer to the objection discussed with so much eloquence by Dr. Chalmers?[1] It is thus stated by himself: "How is it consistent with the dignity, the impartiality, the comprehensiveness of God's proceedings, that He should make so special and pre-eminent a provision for the salvation of the inhabitants of this earth, when there are such myriads of other worlds, all of which may require the like provision, and all of which have an equal claim to the Creator's care?" But why should the care of the Creator, in *any* of His operations, be limited by the knowledge or conceptions of man? All the writers upon this question appear to assume that when the Son of God became man, He divested Himself of the Essential Nature of His Divinity, and became finite though He had been Infinite. It is the Christian doctrine that the Divine nature is in a mysterious manner united to the human, in the Saviour of the world; but it does not therefore become confined within the conditions of finite being. Scripture teaches no such impossibility. It may be a question between Romanists and Protestants, whether, in consequence of the Incarnation, the Human Substance receives in Christ the Attributes of the Divine, but no theologian can imagine that the Divine Nature becomes limited to the conditions of the human. God is always and essentially Infinite. There ought to be no more difficulty in conceiving his Omnipresence in His works of grace than in those of nature. The Divine Infinity may extend to the mysterious communion of the Incarnation, as well as to the less intimate Presence of the Creator with all His works.

[1] Astronomical Discourses.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DIVINE HOLINESS.

1. Goodness includes Holiness.—2. The Infinite Being is Holy.—3. The Sense of Duty.—4. Man, the Work of a holy Creator.—5. Degenerate Tribes.—6. Happiness in virtuous Acts.—7. Happiness of habitual Virtue.—8. Depth of the Moral Feelings.—9. Conscience.—10. The Perfect Law.—11. Origin of the Moral Feelings.—12. Perversion of the Faculties.—13. Purpose of Life.—14. The starry Heaven, and the Moral Law.

1. When the Creator is regarded as a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, the word Goodness is intended to include Holiness. "We understand by the Goodness of God," says Dr. Chalmers, "not His Benevolence or His Kindness alone. The term is comprehensive of all Moral Excellence."[1] The present state of religion, both in doctrine and in practice, makes it important, in considering the Divine Attributes, to give a prominent place to the Holiness of the Deity, or His complacency in moral goodness and order, and His repugnance to moral evil. Indeed it is always important to remember that He is holy and just, because the human heart is prone to think of Him as simple Benevolence,[2] and to disbelieve His judgments upon sin. Men have always been glad to be told that there is some mistake in the supposed connection between sin and death. In the course of life the moral powers are often worn out by vicious habits, but the desire of happiness retains its strength to the last. The mind is then disposed to measure the Divine Nature by its perverted conceptions. It wishes to believe in Infinite Benevolence, but is afraid of Infinite Justice. It listens willingly to confident assertions, that the judgment upon evil is contrary to right ideas of the Divine Perfections. On this account, and because modern deism, like many former systems, relies very much on this false notion, it is necessary to speak particularly of the Divine Holiness.

[1] Bridgewater Treatise, chap. viii. § 6.

[2] "Dieu humainement débonnaire et indulgent." Maleb. Entret. viii. xv.

2. Among the most convincing evidences of the Being of God, we have already noticed the facts of man's moral nature. These facts are still more important for their indications of the Divine Character. They discover Him to be holy, and just, and true. The Divine Attribute of Holiness might be inferred from the Unity and Infinity of the Creator. The omnipotent, omniscient Author of all things, can not be the author of confusion. The perfect harmony of His Nature must give perfect harmony to His works. He is too great to be moved by discordant motives. His creatures, as they proceed from His hand, must therefore be happy in the universal harmony of creation. The Omniscient must be perfectly acquainted with all their needs and desires. He can not but understand the relations on which their happiness depends. He can not be influenced by motives inconsistent with the perfection of His works.

The Moral Nature of man will be found to bear evidence to the same truth.

3. The Sense of Duty, and the faculty by which the mind is able to direct itself toward what it deems to be right, independently of physical causes or mere intellectual perceptions, have already been noticed as indications of a Creator, who has made man for some purpose. Whether the judgment in different individuals be right or wrong, whether the feelings be healthy or depraved, the conviction to which all men are liable—This is what I *ought* to do—is irrelevant to every scheme of atheism or pantheism. It may often be the conviction of prudence, or utility, or good taste; it may sometimes be dictated by the desire of happiness, or of man's highest dignity; but even in these cases, and in its most ordinary applications, the mere faculty of choice breaks asunder the atheistic or pantheistic chain of causal succession. If eternal atoms could be conceived to have marshaled themselves into the order of the world, and to have communicated life, and feeling, and movement to the inferior creatures, there would still be a wide chasm between them and man. He alone acts with purpose, and may discover in this faculty the Being of a Creator who acts with purpose. The atheist may declare all things to be necessitated, and the feeling of power a delusion. But at least it is improbable

that natural causes would have given birth to the delusion. The beasts act as the atheist affirms man to act. They are moved by outward causes and sensible impulses. They have no faculty of choice, and are not troubled with the delusion that they have.

But the sense of duty is something more than the faculty of choice. It claims the right of choosing and of directing. It enjoins or forbids. It may be moved by the desire of happiness, or the dignity of humanity, it may accommodate itself to motives of prudence or utility; but the mind has to use an effort against itself, and to repress its natural feelings, before it can be persuaded that there is, in no case, a deeper meaning than any of these, in the conviction that there is something which it ought to do. It is a judgment implying a solemn obligation to a Superior. Such is the natural feeling of individuals, and the general decision of mankind.

The sense of duty is an ultimate, unresolvable faculty of the soul. In practice, it is always mixed up with a moral judgment of the understanding, or a moral feeling of the heart, which gives it meaning and application in any particular case; but, of itself, it is something distinct from any judgment, or any feeling of right or wrong. These may vary, and do vary, more or less among mankind. One people may protect their children, another may offer their children in sacrifice; yet both may have the feelings of right and wrong, and may think they are doing what is right. And it is a matter of experience that even when the feeling or judgment is perverted, the mind has a certain satisfaction in doing what it feels it ought, and a certain remorse or fear in neglecting it. The savage may find pleasure in the horrid rites of fiend-worship, though not the pleasure of true piety. He may be distracted with fear, if his accustomed sacrifices have been prohibited. Thus, in his deep degeneracy, he bears testimony to an original disposition of man's constitution, to direct himself according to some Superior Rule or Law. He furnishes an evidence of a Creator superior to man. It is in the *character* of the moral judgments and feelings, and the natural effects of their action upon the soul, that we find indications of the Character of that Creator.

4. The moral constitution of the mind presents many distinct

and beautiful indications of the Moral Attributes of Him who called it into being. This is true, notwithstanding the fallen estate of man. If it were not so—if utter moral ruin were the universal condition of the race, all religion would be impossible. The invisible things of God would be unseen in creation, and revelation would be a dead letter to minds incapable of discerning between right and wrong. It will be a part of our purpose, in following chapters, to show that the degeneracy of the race has been checked, and its corrupt tendencies restrained by special interpositions of Heaven, and through the great work of the "Saviour of all men." We are now concerned with the fact, that the religious faculty is seldom found to be quite extinct in human nature. As man is fallen, so the ground is accursed. As man is prone to evil, so we find every where in nature the thorn and the thistle, contending with the fruits and flowers of the earth. And yet the Goodness of God is every where manifest in nature, underlying the confusion of evil which covers the surface of the world. In like manner, beneath the corruption and depravity of man we find, in his natural constitution, indications of the Holiness of God.

But can we separate the work of the Creator from that of the creature—the original purpose from the perversion? In the case of human workmanship, it is not impossible to distinguish between the intention of an artificer and the subsequent cause of derangement in his work. "This has been well illustrated," says Dr. Chalmers,[1] "by the regulator of a watch, whose office and primary design . . . is to control the velocity of its movements. And we should still perceive this to have been its destination, even though, by accident or decay, it had lost the power of command which at first belonged to it." "By the inspection of the machinery alone we both learn the injury which has been done to it, and the condition in which it originally came from the hand of its maker."

In endeavoring to discern between the work of God and the work of man, it would seem to be an important principle, that *God is the only Creator*. He gave to man the essential powers of his being. He made all things which exist. Man marred his perfect work, but neither man nor finite being could create.

[1] Bridgewater Treatise, chap. i. § 6.

If, then, we could know that human nature possessed original and incurable propensities to vice; if the mind were so constituted by creation as to delight in strife, and to be happy in producing misery and confusion, this would be an evidence of a malevolent Creator. If we find, on the contrary, that, notwithstanding its derangement and liability to err, it possesses no qualities but such as are capable of their good application; if we discover, besides, that there are plain warnings in man that sin leads to misery; if there be manifest determinations in favor of virtue, even in this fallen world, and a general assent of mankind to the excellence of virtues, which yet they do not practice themselves—virtues which are essential to civilization, and tend to the harmony both of the individual soul and of the whole race, we have then strong evidence at once of the Wisdom, the Benevolence, and the Holiness of the Creator.

5. Now it is a matter of universal experience that the judgments and feelings of mankind, notwithstanding the prevalence of vice, are all but unanimous in favor of virtue. At least, if there be any exceptions to this truth, it is among tribes degraded beneath the brutes, and who have forfeited the right of being enumerated with the human race. The appeal to these tribes, in disproof either of the moral nature of man or of the moral Character of the Creator, is quite irrelevant. As well might appeal be made to an *individual* who has worn out every good feeling and every good principle by a life of vice. The degraded man or the degenerate tribes, in fact, corroborate the very truths which they were intended to disprove. They show that moral degeneracy leads to the general degradation of human nature. Unless man be evidently degenerate, his judgment is found to approve truth, gratitude, benevolence, and to disapprove the opposite vices; his natural feelings sympathize with suffering, and are offended by injustice, falsehood, and hypocrisy.

These, then, are indications of the Creator's Character. They show us that He loves virtue and hates vice; or, to express the same truth in other words, that the law of His dealings with His creatures tends to the harmony and order of all creation.

6. It has been already observed that the sense of duty is not an

unfeeling imperative, but is attended and followed by complacency or remorse, when its dictates are obeyed or set at defiance. This may be the case when a man has done what he feels or thinks he ought, though the moral judgment or feeling should be mistaken. But the satisfaction can not be the same, either in kind or in degree, with that which attends on conduct regulated by sound principles and a good heart. For, in the first place, it is a truth of moral science, that virtuous affections have a happiness in themselves, and vicious affections a wretchedness, distinct and independent of the moral complacency or remorse which follows them; just as the relish of food is something distinct from the satisfaction of hunger. That envy, malice, hatred, fraud, are in themselves torments to the soul, while there is peace and gladness in honest principles and benevolent feelings, is a truth which needs only to be stated.

But besides this, the consciousness of duty fulfilled necessarily carries with it a far higher pleasure, when the moral judgment is sound, and the affections pure and virtuous. Truth is always more agreeable to the mind than error, as light is more pleasant to the eyes than darkness. In fact, a sound judgment is a source of pleasure in the conduct of life, as it is in any intellectual pursuit; good affections bring their own gladness; and both the emotional and the intellectual gratification combine, in the pure and noble happiness of the mind which feels it has fulfilled its duty, and sees that it has followed the direction of its highest destiny.

7. And farther: besides the happiness of particular virtuous actions, there is a still higher happiness in habitual virtue. Besides the relish of taste, and the gratification of satisfied hunger, there is a constant enjoyment in the possession of good health and a sound constitution. This, it has been said, forms a great part of the happiness of the brute creation. In like manner, besides the inherent pleasure of virtuous affections, and of a good conscience, in acts of duty or of generosity, there is a deep and lasting happiness in the healthy spirit of a well-ordered and virtuous soul, which attains its highest and fullest realization in "the peace of God which passeth knowledge." In this constant happiness

of a sound spiritual nature, man has one of the most convincing proofs that the Living God is with him, and the clearest indications of the Divine Character. It is here especially that he feels and knows himself to be in close relation with the Infinite.

8. And most men know something of the depth of such a feeling. Most men, if they will reflect and look thoughtfully within themselves, may perceive that there is something in the feeling of duty deeper than strikes them at first sight—something deeper than any consideration of happiness or general utility. The sense or feeling that benevolence *is due* to others, and ought to be felt and shown, is something more than the complacency of a benevolent disposition. This virtue is delightful in itself. A man is beneath his nature who has no pleasure in alleviating the sufferings or increasing the happiness of others. But there is something deeper than this in the moral nature—something which seems to go beyond it, as the Infinite exceeds the finite.

Men may quell the feeling and forget it; but none have always been free from that remorse, which is felt to contain something more awful than can be accounted for. When a man considers attentively the feeling which prompts him to a good action, when he calls himself to search its origin, and to reflect upon its significancy, when he observes the effects of moral goodness upon his nature, it seems as though he looked into an unsearchable depth within his soul.

The feeling of self-reproach and self-abhorrence for selfish and wicked deeds, has in it something of the same awful character. It is a feeling which years of vice and contempt of God can not wear away. Sudden fears and compunctions will sometimes pierce the thickest covering of sin, and shoot forth unbidden through the ruins of the moral constitution. The contempt of self, so common to confirmed vice; the wretchedness of the strife and confusion which fill the soul; the abhorrence of the very dispositions to which it is enslaved, are irrefragable testimonies to the Character of the soul's Creator. These were the feelings, too well known, which harassed the debased spirit, and lacerated the guilty conscience of Tiberius, when he indited his memorable letter to the Roman senate. "His villainies and crimes," says the historian, "had

turned to his own punishment. So truly was it affirmed by the most illustrious of wise men, that if the minds of tyrants were laid open, they would be seen marked with contusions and wounds; since, as the body by stripes, so the soul is torn by cruelty, lust, evil counsels: insomuch that neither his high estate, nor his habitual seclusion could protect Tiberius from the confession of his inward torments and self-inflicted punishments."[1]

9. In the foregoing observations the soul has been considered capable of virtuous or vicious affections. To speak in logical order, it must be said that man is capable of opposite affections, some of which are found, in proportion as they are cherished, to be attended by happy emotions, to advance his general well-being, and to secure the harmony of his nature. Virtuous conduct may then be defined to be that which tends to the harmony of the soul. Not that this, or any definition, can furnish a rule of practice. Nor is there any feeling or faculty in man which gives a universal criterion of the difference between right and wrong. He is subject to various and conflicting emotions. Vicious propensities may have an unhealthy predominance. Even virtuous dispositions may be misapplied. Ill-judged benevolence may be pernicious to society. The virtuous hatred of vice and fraud may be pressed beyond its bounds, and may trespass upon the duties of charity. Indeed some moralists maintain revenge to be a healthful feeling, overlooking the truth that man can never know his brother to be incorrigible, and therefore ought to distinguish between him and his crimes.

That there is no universal criterion of morality, and no infallible moral guide of human nature, is evident from the frequent difficulty of correct moral judgment. Thus, they who would abolish capital punishments argue that no malefactor is utterly depraved. The perpetrator of a great crime may have within him a spring of goodness which has never been opened out. Society ought therefore to aim at correction, but can have no right to be vindictive. On the other hand, it may be argued, that the duty of

[1] Tacitus (Ann. vi. 6) quotes from Socrates, Ὁ τῷ ὄντι τύραννος τῷ ὄντι δοῦλος . . . ἐάν τις ὅλην ψυχὴν ἐπίστηται θεάσασθαι, καὶ φόβου γέμων διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου, σφαδασμῶν τε καὶ ὀδυνῶν πλήρης. Plato, Rep., ix. p. 579.

society to the individual is overruled by consideration for the whole body. Or a third party may maintain that the Divine prerogative of vengeance has, in one case, and one only, been conferred on society by special revelation. Such instances make it evident that man has in himself no infallible criterion of right and wrong, and can have none, not even from revelation, because what is infallible in itself becomes fallible in his interpretation of it. His moral nature directs him to a perfect law; but he can learn his duty only as he can become acquainted with truth, or succeed in any pursuit of life—by means of thought, experience, and attention. His guide is the faculty of reason, which examines the nature of the moral feelings, and considers their tendency, and, by the force of its approbation or disapprobation, is able to modify and to direct them. Conscience, then, is the reflex action of the reason upon the moral feelings and judgments of right and wrong. It is compounded of several distinct original faculties of the mind; but, as we have observed in the intellectual processes of thought and perception, they unite in one simple indivisible energy.

10. But though man has no perfect law within himself, yet experience shows that the very same course of conduct which brings along with it the best and noblest happiness of which he is capable, is that which tends also to the soul's health and dignity; and is, besides, that which, as far as human judgment can reach, conduces to the common welfare of society, and the general improvement of the human race; while, on the contrary, the affections which are miserable in their action leave their pernicious effects behind them in the spirit, are fraught with confusion to mankind, and, unless their malignant influence be restrained, insure the degradation of the race to the lowest depths of savage life.

These, then, are evidences in man's moral constitution of the truth discoverable by reason alone. They show that the perfect moral law may be defined to be the law of universal order. "Order is heaven's first law." This was a wise saying, and contains a fundamental truth. The perfect law tends to the order of the universe, in the unity of all the creatures with one another, and with the Creator. Universal order is possible, though no soul of

man, but One only, and He Divine, has been perfectly conformed to the Will of God. As reason led us to conceive that the works of the Creator must be perfectly adapted to one another, or perfectly adjusted to their position in the universal frame, so conscience gives us independent intimations of an eternal and universal law of right. Reason interprets this intimation of a moral law, and identifies it with its own anticipation of a law of order.

The particular applications of the law of right must depend upon the natural constitution of created beings, and their relations to one another and to the Creator. But as all things are originated by the Deity, as all the powers of nature and of living beings are derived from Him, so it may be said that the law of their order has its ultimate foundation in the Divine Nature. Perfect goodness is perfect consistency with the Divine Will. It is the entire union and agreement of the finite creature with the Infinite Creator. It is order and harmony in the universe. Evil, or falsehood, is the confusion of creation, the breaking of its harmony, the opposition of the derived to the Underived.

11. Thus the constitution of man's nature furnishes, in the *results* and *tendencies* of his moral agency, as far as they can be followed, evidences of the Being and Holiness of the Creator. Similar indications may be traced in the *origin* of the moral feelings, so far as they can be followed backward to their source. The benevolent affections rest on sympathy, which is an original mental principle. The infant will sympathize with pain long before it can speak. The sympathy of laughter is almost universal. Is there not in this principle, and in the affections which naturally arise from it, an intimation that man was intended to live in society, and originally endowed with a disposition to love his neighbor? And may we not find the remnants of an original love of God in the strong feeling of right, and the natural hatred of falsehood and injustice? For to love the universal order is to love God. There is nothing selfish in these feeings. Benevolence may be attended by happiness, but happiness is incidental to it, not its aim. And the love of justice is as strong for another as for one's self. It can only become stronger for one's self when it is mixed

up with a wholly different feeling. The incidental pleasure of the moral feelings, and their general tendency to gladden the spirit and to ennoble it, show that their right exercise is in accordance with the intentions of the Creator.

12. In its moral nature, then, as in its intellectual nature, the soul comes into being possessed of certain original tendencies and capacities, which give rise, in its primary experience, to derived and compound faculties. These are apprehended in all experience as simple energies. No faculty is of man's own creating. All bear testimony to the Character of Him who implanted them. There is none without its proper object and its right use. Human power may misapply, and pervert, and wear out the original dispositions. But having done this, it can not call them back at will. It may give them their direction, but it can not hinder the results. And they may be seen, even in their perversion, to have been such as would have maintained the free agent in the sphere of universal order. The good feelings may be weak. They may be overborne by the desire of pleasure. For the mind is wont to transfer its energies from the proper ends of its faculties to the pleasures which nature has made incidental to them; as the miser transfers his love from the goods, for which money is valuable, to the money itself. But man possesses a faculty by which he can approximate nearer to the course of duty, and give strength to the good dispositions. The weakness of these dispositions, the feebleness of the faculty which ought to be supreme, the fickleness and instability of the will, are indications that he is not as he was created. The dimness of the moral sight shows the need of Divine Guidance; the weakness of moral resolution the want of Divine Assistance.

13. But the condition of man, as he is, affords indications of the purpose of life, which farther illustrate the Divine Conduct and Character. If life be intended for any great or useful purpose, if man have any known work to do, any discoverable duties to fulfill, they are to be found in his moral trial and improvement. The constitution of human nature and the experience of life, contain many evidences that we are placed here for this especial purpose, that we may be established in virtue by probation;

[illegible]d by gaining moral strength and firm habits of goodness, may [illegible] prepared for the possession and enjoyment of a better life to [illegible]ome.

One indication of this purpose of life deserves a more particular attention. The comparison of the sensational and the moral powers in their course of growth and development, and of the pleasures attending their exercise, affords a strong presumption, that, as the one attain their end in this life, the other point to something beyond the present. The right employment of the sensational and physical powers appear, like that of the moral powers, to be attended with pleasure till their growth has been perfected, and their use fully attained. This source of pleasure, by which the mind is drawn into its intercourse with the world, and attains the use of its senses and other faculties, has been noticed in the former part. It is mentioned by Dr. Paley[1] as an instance of the Divine Goodness. "The young of all animals," he says, "appear to me to receive pleasure simply from the exercise of their limbs and bodily faculties, without reference to any end to be attained, or any use to be answered by their exertion. A child is delighted with speaking without having any thing to say, and with walking without knowing where to go. And prior to both these, I am disposed to believe that the waking hours of infancy are agreeably taken up with the exercise of vision; or, perhaps, more properly speaking, with learning to see." This pleasure is similar to that which attends the development of the moral powers. But while the former belongs only to the young, and ceases when they have attained the use of their faculties, the moral complacency, on the contrary, is, to the end of life, one of the best enjoyments of the good man.

This, then, is an indication that, as childhood is the time for maturing the powers which are to find their full employment in life, so the whole of life is the childhood of the moral nature, and is preparatory to a state of perfection beyond the grave. The powers of the body attain their maturity in this life; the moral powers are always imperfect, but always capable of improvement. It is probable that as those are so essential to the preservation of

[1] Nat. Theol. c. xxvi.

life in the present state, so these can not be neglected with impunity to the soul in the life to come.[1]

14. Thus, in the innumerable adjustments of the external universe, we have found the most remarkable evidences of the Divine Wisdom; in the moral constitution of man, evidences no less striking of His Holiness. "Two things there are," said Kant, "which, the oftener and the more steadfastly we consider, fill the mind with an ever new, an ever rising admiration and reverence—*the* STARRY HEAVEN *above*, *the* MORAL LAW *within*."[2] May not the thought suggest the comparison of the perfect order of the works of God, with the disorder which is wrought when His works can be perverted by the will of man? Should not the view of the stability and harmony of the creation awaken the energies, and direct the faculties, by which the finite may be brought within the universal order of the Infinite? And if confusion prevail in human life, should not the immensity of the harmonious universe restrain the skeptical imagination, that the strife which reigns in this little world of man can be any disparagement of the Infinite Perfections of the Creator? And may not this truth hold good, though the moral law within the soul should be as permanent in its action, as enduring in its effects, as the laws of the starry universe above?

CHAPTER V.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

1. Is Goodness Infinite?—2. Expectation of Reason.—3. Evils of Life.—4. Perversions of Christianity.—5. Skeptical Objections.—6. Constancy of the Divine Benevolence.—7. Gratuitous Pleasures of Nature.—8. Evil, never a natural Contrivance.—9. Often tends to Good.—10. Sufferings of Mankind.—11. Often exaggerated.—12. Infinite Goodness must extend to all.—13. Moral Evils.—14. Origin of Evil.

1. THE manifestations of the Divine Wisdom and Holiness in nature and in man, are, at the same time, manifestations of the

[1] On the growth of moral habits, see Butler's Analogy, chap. v.; Chalmers' Bridgewater Treatise, chap. iii.

[2] Sir W. Hamilton's Translation, Discussions, 2d ed. p. 310. The nineteenth Psalm contains the same thought.

Divine Benevolence. It has been evident in the view of nature, that the creation has been ordered with regard to the well-being and happiness of the creatures. But the Goodness of the Creator is not simple Benevolence. That it does not imply the absolute prohibition of pain, nor the determination of things to give unconditional enjoyment to every individual, is an obvious truth. And it is equally true that, so far as experience goes, the means of enjoyment bear no proportion to the merits of individuals.

It becomes, then, the most interesting and momentous of all questions concerning the Supreme Being; can it be known, notwithstanding the manifold ills of life, that He is Infinitely Good? And what signification are we to attach to the conception of Infinite Goodness? The Creator has provided with marvelous Wisdom for the well-being of man; but the course of nature appears to be bound in rigorous laws, which often seem to give secure enjoyment to the vicious, and to find their victims among the virtuous. Can we know, notwithstanding, that Infinite Love is over all, and that even the dispensation of sufferings is governed by Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, not only to the universal system, but to every soul? Does the Ordainer of nature's laws regard us individually and with affection? The Wisdom of creation may well convince us that He has not made man for nought, nor for the present life alone. Can we trust, then, to Infinite Holiness and Love for the life hereafter? Thousands of conditions combine to ward off innumerable ills in this system to which we belong. They give us, in general, a large measure of enjoyment. But time is no more than an instant before eternity. Who, then, would prefer to have all he may desire in the present, rather than to find the life beyond death adapted to the nature of the soul? I may be delighted by the splendors of the firmament, or the beauties of the earth; but who would not see the sky to be as brass, and the rain of the land as powder and dust, rather than lose the hope of a happy immortality? I may have faculties for the attainment of truth, and may find pleasure in the pursuit; but who would not choose to live in ignorance of every thing, rather than be ignorant that God is Good?

2. Reason will anticipate that the Infinite Wisdom of the Creator

will extend to include Infinite Goodness within its agency. His Wisdom is manifested in the relations and adjustments of the insentient parts of creation: His Goodness in similar adaptations, when viewed as including the capacities of happiness and enjoyment, which are the endowments of living creatures. The mind naturally anticipates that a Being so wise and powerful can not be otherwise than good. It is impossible that One so great can be subject to the transient motives and selfish purposes which influence the conduct of man. The mind is disposed to believe that the perfect order of the works of God will extend to the harmony between the feelings and desires of living souls, and the outward world which environs them.

3. But it is evident that reason, if left to itself, is apt to draw a conclusion at variance with manifest facts. It often seeks to extend the Perfection and Immutability of the Creator to the imperfect and mutable creature. We shall have occasion to notice instances, in which arguments from conceptions of the Infinite Being give conclusions at variance with common experience. A theorist who overlooks the facts of life, may easily hasten to the conclusion that the works of the All-wise, Almighty Being, must be in perfect harmony among themselves. He will expect the creation to be perfect, and happiness unfailing. But when he takes account of the sin and suffering which abound, he will often find his conceptions to be rudely shaken, and may be perplexed to reconcile the truth of Infinite Goodness with the many ills of life.

For who does not know that nature has its dark clouds as well as its sunshine? Who has not felt for others, at least, in the troubles of life, though he have been free from them himself? The philosopher in his closet, and at his ease, may indolently think of God as universally and infinitely benevolent; but he is more wrapped up in self-complacency than he ought to be, if he can pass without to the thronged lanes and unwholesome alleys of the town, and can see and hear the squalor, the disease, the hunger, the blasphemy, the reckless denial of the Almighty, and can find it easy, by the light of reason and nature alone, to repress the question which will force itself to the lips—"Are these the works

of the All-perfect God?" It may be true that the sound and healthy mind may find enough in man and nature to repress all doubt of the Divine Goodness. But the experience of life and history has shown that, in seasons of extreme suffering, something more is wanted than natural religion to preserve the mind in its equilibrium.

What becomes of the conception of Infinite Goodness, if it have nothing beyond natural religion for its support, when hundreds are struck down around us by that Asiatic scourge which has carried off half the population of towns abroad, and fallen again, with its former malignity, upon our own country? Feelings are chilled, and reasonings powerless to convince, when our neighbors sink in death almost before our eyes, and are hurriedly buried out of sight. Man needs something more than philosophy to support him in the time of a pestilence yet more virulent, which is said of late to have ravaged a great town[1] of a kindred country, and plunged the inhabitants in that recklessness of extreme calamity, which is powerfully described in the language of an ancient historian.[2] It is often beyond any mere power of man, when he sees the manifold sufferings and sorrows, and still more the wrongs of life—the oppression of virtue, the outrage of innocence, the cruel villainy of brother to brother, the hypocrisy of self-righteousness, the odious tyranny of a miscreant—it is beyond the power of man to separate good from evil, the Creator's work from the creature, to know that all good is of God, all evil contrary to God.

4. And in these days, the difficulty assumes its most aggravated form. Formerly, it was the impious denier of the Almighty who reproached the faithful with the question "Where is thy God?" But now, it is under the cloak of religion, and in the name of the Most Holy, that the worst crimes are perpetrated and defended. In one Christian country, the slave-driver quotes Scripture for his inhuman craft, and pulpits re-echo his defense. In another, the most sacred of trusts is sold for money, or political influence, or family aggrandizement, and the good points of a living are described as minutely as those of a negro slave, the souls as little regarded in either case. And yet, with their slave-auction lists and

[1] New Orleans.

[2] Thucydides, Book ii.

their Ecclesiastical Gazettes before their eyes, Protestants will be looking to Rome for the traffic in "bodies and souls of men!"[1] Or if we look to the East, we read of imperial covetousness and ambition, ill disguised by imperial falsehood and hypocrisy, and find the honor and truthfulness in the insulted Turk, which have departed from the "Head of the Holy Eastern Church." When a powerful Christian monarch will stoop to the lowest intrigue to effect his ends, and is ready to deluge the earth with the blood of thousands who may stand in the way of his ambition, while he deceives his ignorant subjects with the worn-out idea of fighting for the sepulchre of the Saviour, and defending the true faith, many will be unable to repress the question—"Is this world, with all it contains, indeed the work of the All-holy, Almighty God?"

The successful wrongs of life have often persuaded the theorist that his lofty speculations were delusive, the highest inferences of his reason inconsistent with palpable facts. Mankind have, therefore, constantly fallen back from the highest theology of reason to the finite gods, the unholy demons of heathendom. Or they have believed in a God infinitely great, but not infinitely good. The gods of human imagining have too often been the very reverse in character to the God of Truth. Weak and passionate, like man himself, cruel, lustful, envious of the happy, they needed to be appeased by frightful atrocities and hideous human sacrifices. For its assurance that the Supreme Being is Perfect Goodness, natural religion has been much indebted to a volume which professes to contain a revelation from Himself.

5. Yet, strange to say, it is against the character of God, as discovered to us in this very Book, that our modern skeptics are directing their most determined hostility. It is attempted, by writers of various shades of opinion, to supersede Christianity with a scheme of unbelief which would degrade the Bible to the level of a work of man, and affirms its principal truths to be inconsistent with the Divine Wisdom and Goodness. It is proposed to us as the subject of this Essay, to consider the evidence that there is a Supreme Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, and especially to answer objections to the Divine Wisdom and Goodness.

[1] *σωμάτων καὶ ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων.* Rev. xviii. 13.

With these advocates of modern infidelity before us, concurring, as we shall find, in support of one great antichristian system, which is maintained by some of them with avowed atheism, by others with the pretense of a pure theism, more reasonable and consistent, they affirm, than that of revelation; there can be little question as to how we may fulfill the pious intention, which, eighty years ago, dictated the above request.

6. The Benevolence of the Creator is every where manifest in the universe, both in the arrangements of nature, and in the constitution of living beings. It every where underlies the confusion with which the sin of man has overspread the surface of human life. Beneath the varied troubles and the shifting turbulence of evil, the laws of harmony and order remain unchangeable. It is but the surface of the ocean, and but a little portion of the surface, that can be seen at once; and, while the clouds and storms sweep over it, and darkness covers its face, we may imagine it to be in commotion through all its depths. But beneath the varying tempests, and the fitful agitations of the surface, the great deep remains ever the same. So is the Goodness of God beneath the evils of life. These are constantly changing and shifting their forms. New blights, new pestilences are continually rising in the place of old. Pests hitherto unknown attack the fruits of the ground: new and strange diseases lie in wait for the lives of men. Plague and small-pox are checked by human improvements and ingenuity, and malignant cholera springs up to do their work.

But God is Unchangeable, and the laws of his universe are abiding. No derangement can be permanent; no ills can establish their dominion over the course of nature. The thorn and the thistle may overrun the fields of the sluggard; the tempest may sometimes carry desolation to the most diligent; or, on the other hand, man may increase and improve the productions of nature by attention and ingenuity; but the laws of nature on which he depends retain their constancy from age to age. The gifts of a munificent Providence are shed forth in abundance from year to year. Famine is the exception, and does not overpower the rule.

The bodily frame of man, so fearfully and wonderfully made, is subject to varied and numerous disorders. Ten thousand arrange-

ments and adjustments must combine within and around us; ten thousand forces must be exactly balanced, to maintain happiness and even life for a single moment. It is the exception, not the rule, when one arrangement falls into disorder. It is the exception, when a single force of so many runs into deficiency or excess, and gives rise to internal derangement of the system, or pollutes without us the breath of life.

7. The means of happiness in all the faculties of human nature, whether of sense, of intellect, or of emotion, remain unchanged in every age. One of the most remarkable proofs of the Divine Benevolence is to be found in the enjoyments which attend the temperate use of all the faculties, mental as well as bodily. The gratuitous pleasure superadded to animal sensations has been instanced by Dr. Paley.[1] Attention to the conditions of life and health might have been made compulsory by an economy of pain. Hunger would compel a man to his food without the gratification of relish. The same observation applies to the mental faculties. The necessities of subsistence might furnish a sufficient incentive to intellectual exertion, without the pleasures which attend it. The fear of punishment, immediate judgment upon wickedness, might enforce the moral obligations, without the superadded happiness of a good conscience. The conjunction of pleasure with the right exercise of all the powers, is, in fact, a general law of creation, and is a striking proof of the Benevolence of the Creator.

8. The general Goodness of God can not reasonably be questioned. His agency secures the well-being and happiness of man and the lower creatures by innumerable provisions. "The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence." And man possesses more enjoyment in his daily life than he is thankful for, and more means of enjoyment than he puts in action. It is also an important observation, that of the many evils to which all creatures are liable, it can not fairly be affirmed of one that it is the result of creative design. Benevolent designs are endless: evils are incidental and exceptional. They do not spring from the permanent arrangements or essential properties of things. This truth is well illustrated by Paley. "A sickle is not made to cut

[1] Nat. Theol. chap. xxvi.

the reaper's hand, though, from the construction of the instrument and the manner of using it, this mischief often follows." But in an instrument of torture, "pain and misery are the very objects of contrivance. Now nothing of the sort is to be found in the works of nature." On this head it may suffice to refer to Paley's admirable chapter.

9. It is not less true that things confessedly evil, tend continually to beneficial results. Whatever causes may have brought the human constitution to be what it is—whatever account be given of its degeneracy—it needs no proof nor illustration to show that man, as he now is, gains innumerable advantages from that economy of the world which admits suffering and pain. He is little acquainted with himself who sighs for a life of undisturbed ease and enjoyment, or imagines that such a condition would be one of happiness. If all pleasures were as common as the air, they would be as little enjoyed and as little noticed. The moral improvement of the race, as well as of individuals, is effected, in a large measure, through suffering and sorrow. Nay, they are a main-spring of that exertion, and that exercise of all the faculties, which are necessary to rescue man from the wretchedness of indolence, and to engage him in the various pursuits which are the chief means of happiness. He needs the incentives of suffering to awaken him to life; the pleasures of activity are superadded.

10. Thus far, then, on the general agency of the Divine Goodness. But it must be admitted that when we pass from the general course and constitution of things to the condition of individuals; still more, when we look at the actual state of large portions of the race, we meet with difficulties which some minds can not reconcile with Infinite Goodness. Granted, it may be said, that the laws of nature aim at beneficent ends, yet they have frequent and terrible exceptions. A plague may not alter the universal laws, but it may desolate a country, and the bereaved and dying are not consoled by the assurance that its ravages will cease. The storm will be stilled, and the raging sea will be calm; but not till many brave hearts, and many loving hearts should have ceased to beat. The earth may in general bring forth abundantly; but the orphans may have been defrauded of their competency, and the

widow may see them in want of bread. Bodily disorder may be the exception; but some can part from suffering only with life, and bear, perhaps, the sins of their fathers, who suffered little for themselves. Air, earth, and sea may teem with happy life; but large towns teem with profligacy and wretchedness; continents teem with barbarism, and the cry of their atrocities ascends continually to heaven.

Can it be said, in spite of all, that God is Infinitely Good? Can it be known that He is not merely the Ordainer of general laws, which aim at beneficence, but are perpetually frustrated, or ensure happiness to some favored portions of the race, only by making victims of the rest; but that he cares for every one individually—that His love is upon all His creatures? Must not Infinite Power and Goodness secure the happiness of all, by laws unfailing as well as universal?

11. In answer to these questions it must be observed, in the first place, that their force is often greatly exaggerated. Men are apt to judge of the happiness of others, by comparing their condition with their own. Nothing can be more fallacious. In fact, there is no more striking evidence of the Divine Benevolence than in the ability of the mind, not only to struggle with elastic power against the feeling of adversity, but also to adapt itself to wide varieties of circumstances. One in ease and affluence may think the humblest stations to be unhappy. But they are capable of the same gladness, sometimes of a higher happiness than his own. This remark will apply even to savage life. We need not sigh for it, with Rousseau, nor be ungrateful for the blessings of civilization; but may easily believe the state of barbarism to be capable of far more enjoyments than, from our dependence on civilization, we might expect. In every condition of life, the heaviest afflictions, the most intolerable wretchedness, are not those of circumstances, but what a man makes for himself. Insufferable misfortunes, heart-rending bereavements are rare, in comparison of self-wrought miseries. The most wretched of mankind are they who have possessed abundant means of happiness, but through recklessness, or vice, or neglect, have rendered themselves incapable of enjoying them.

12. It must be admitted, however, that we do not thus touch the root of the difficulty. We can but curtail its thick branches, and lessen the dark shadow they cast upon the sunshine of nature. Many are heavily afflicted, and for their lifetime; sometimes through what appear to be accidental failures of the general laws of nature, often through the faults of others. Some effort of thought is necessary to imagine their position in life, and to view the question of Divine Goodness as it must appear to them. At first sight they may think themselves the victims of general laws, who suffer that others may be happy. The laws of nature are rigorous and unpitying. No calamity can interrupt them, no suffering can make them pause. There were an end of the doctrine of Infinite Goodness, if this were all that could be said. Infinite Wisdom may work by general laws, and though there should be much waste in nature, may be conceived to accomplish its ends. The minute seeds of the ground, the stupendous globes of the sky may, many of them, be superabundant productions of general laws. They may be imagined to be sparks from the anvil of creation, or shards from the footsteps of the Creator, and many minds will think it no disparagement to Infinite Wisdom. But Goodness can not be conceived to be Infinite unless it reach to individuals and to all. It may work by general laws; but if the laws be unequal in their results, there must be an affectionate purpose superior to them. Can one know then, in severe affliction, that there is? Can one know that nothing happens to himself, beside the purpose of Infinite Goodness? Is there truth in the consolation that he is called to suffer, though his suffering be the result of general laws?

At least he has no reason to think otherwise. There is no opposition between laws of nature and a particular providence of Goodness. The origin and the continued causes of the laws are equally beyond the reach of knowledge. Every event of general laws may be as much determined by the Divine Will as if it stood alone. And natural religion may find a purpose in afflictions, though often uncertain, till it is supported by the assurances of revelation. The highest forms of virtue—mental energy in bodily weakness, patience, fortitude, trust in God—are nurtured in suffering. It may be seen on the face of things that man is not made

only to be happy, but that holiness is before happiness in the purpose of life. No higher privilege or nobler destiny is allotted to man than to be made perfect by suffering, to overrule evil for good. If the manifestations of Divine Power and Wisdom in nature should not convince him that the Disposer of nature is too great to allow any one of His creatures to be afflicted without good purpose, yet, by the revelation of the Divine Holiness in his own moral constitution, he may be assured that his sufferings will be explained, his patience rewarded, and the inequalities of the present redressed in a longer futurity. In the noble qualities which the soul acquires through affliction, it has an instinctive feeling that as it has been fitted for a better life, and advances in its preparation till the time of its departure from the world, so that better life will be given it, which it is calculated to fill. Such a spirit has often been found happy in afflictions, and has exulted under the prolonged agonies of a death of torture.

13. But in considering the physical evils of mankind, are we not precluding the vindication of the Divine Goodness in view of the moral evils which abound? For in these, as well as in the former, the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. Vicious propensities are transmitted in the blood, as well as bodily disorders. And how many are shut up in vice, or find the escape from it far more difficult than it is to others, through penury, or ignorance, or the force of example and habit? This is true of multitudes in this Christian land, much more of the millions of heathendom, who have sunk in degeneracy through the vices of past generations.

Is there then, notwithstanding this worst phase of human misery—worst in reality, though not what may be felt the most by its victims—is there still Infinite Goodness over all? There is still no evidence to the contrary, not even in the moral evils of life. That mankind suffer morally as well as physically through the sins of others, is a part of the constitution of things, for which it may be difficult to assign a sufficient reason. But we can not know that no such reason exists. There would appear to be a Great Purpose of the Almighty in the existence of the human race, as well as a subordinate purpose in that of individuals. And the

greater purpose need not interfere with a single instance of the less. Infinite Holiness and Love may still extend to every man. That creatures may be morally accountable, it is not necessary that they should possess equal endowments and opportunities, but that each be responsible in his measure. When the mind is overborne by the view of evils, it may be difficult to maintain the assurance of Infinite Goodness. But natural religion is not without its clew to the truth, though the light of revelation may be necessary for its full discovery. If the vastness and the stupendous powers of nature do not satisfy the mind that the Maker of all things is too great and too wise to be without a good purpose in the life of every individual, at least they make it certain that He knows the abilities of every man, in all his natural endowments, and under all the circumstances which surround him. He can take account of all the difficulties of life, can discern what is necessitated from what is willful, can estimate every action with perfect judgment. It is no less certain, from the discovery of His Character in the moral nature of man, that He will deal equitably with all. He may impart the gifts of life in different degrees, but He will provide the means of happiness for every creature. The human family is bound in the ties of consanguinity, and the consequent fellowship of sin and suffering; but the moral evils of the race give the occasions of probation to individuals; and, if all be not capable of the same advancement, all have some talent which they may improve, and all will be responsible in their measure. The preparatory life may be imperfect; vice and degradation may be allowed, for wise reasons, to run their course; but the Sense of Right in the soul is an assurance from Him who implanted it, that none can ultimately fail to be happy through any defect in the constitution of things, or any failure of general laws. Whatever may be the fruit of willfulness, none will be the victims of an imperfect nature, nor of the overpowering force of circumstances.

14. Such considerations may satisfy reason. Skepticism can not so easily be silenced. It will carry us yet farther back, and enforce the consideration of a prior question. Granted, it may be said, that a life of ease is not suitable to man as he is; granted that suffering works out good ends, and the highest virtues are

seldom reared in prosperity; yet might not man have possessed, in his original constitution, the highest excellence of which his nature is capable; and might not the outward creation have ministered to his perfect happiness? And must not the failure and imperfection of nature, in both respects, disprove either the Infinite Power or the Infinite Goodness of the Creator? The objection becomes still more urgent when the righteous judgment to come is understood to be a judgment of condemnation to many. We are thus brought to a very old question—that of the Origin of Evil. We shall find in the theories of modern skepticism and speculation, that its repeated discussion in times past has not obviated the necessity of giving it a place in the present undertaking.

CHAPTER VI.

EVIL NOT CHARGEABLE UPON THE CREATOR.

1. The Question can not be evaded.—2. False Assumptions.—3. No invincible Objections to Truth.—4. Bayle's Dogma on Evil.—5. Dualism.—6. Evil a Confusion of Things.—7. The Subordination Theory.—8. Selfish Theories.—9. The Free-will Solution.—10. Objections to it. Divine Helps.—11. Why are Creatures free?—12. The Question unreasonable.—13. Pantheism the Alternative of Evil.—14. Divine Motives.—15. Revelation of superior Beings.—16. Incompetency of Reason.—17. Just Conception of Omnipotence.—18. And of Infinite Goodness.—19. No dogmatic Solution.—20. Summary of Objections.—21. Virtuous Endeavor.

1. To consider the origin and existence of evil, in the universe of an Infinitely Powerful, Wise, and Good Creator, is to enter upon a question which practical men have long considered an unmanageable and fruitless speculation. But it is an inquiry which will be forced upon us, however we may seek to evade it. No question is more fruitful in the objections of skepticism; there is none on which it is more necessary to have definite opinions before we can meet the difficulties, or decline the unwarrantable assumptions of anti-Christian writers.

It is true the question has been repeatedly discussed, from the earliest age of thought, both by heathens and by Christians, who

may have long since said all that can be said upon it. But their most evident conclusions have hitherto had little effect on the general mind of the world; and it may be questioned, whether the current speculations of recent times have been as satisfactory as some which went before them.

When the subject is stated generally, it is sure to be the popular decision that it is beyond our reach; and, if men always acquiesced in this conclusion, there would be little necessity for the present chapter. But the readers of modern skeptical works will not hastily assume that it should be set aside without inquiry. It will appear from a recent work of Mr. Theodore Parker's, that men are apt to be influenced by dogmatic assertions, involving decisions on the very questions, which, if they had been nakedly proposed, would at once have been dismissed as impracticable.

2. If it be the great business of human life to know and to reverence the Almighty, there must be something woefully defective in the state of education, where men can listen with admiration to assertions common with Mr. Parker—that "Revelation attributes to the Deity dark and malignant conduct which it is dreadful to think of," namely, in the discovery of His Judgments upon sin; that "since the devil is the work of God, all the evil which is in the devil must have originated with God, . . . and therefore the character of absolute evil, which is in the devil, must have been . . ." with a multitude of similar assertions on the "Popular Theology," in the quotation of which it will often be necessary to stop short.

All these opinions, and the whole of his vehement opposition to the revealed doctrines of the Divine Conduct and Character, rest upon an assumed theory of the origin, the existence, and the destiny of evil. This theory is not explicitly enunciated, but it underlies all his writings. It is begged in all those audacious assertions, which easily gain the attention of the half-learned, simply because they are audacious; and become still more mischievous when they fall in with the disposition, so natural to man, to separate God's Goodness from His Judgments—to think he may do as he will, and "shall not surely die." When the heart is captivated by such figments, the head easily forgets to see how weak they are.

3. The Christian theist will not be content to receive these opinions, however strongly expressed, as the legitimate conclusions of reason upon the doctrines of revelation. He is sure that man can never find himself in a dilemma between renouncing reason or revelation. Both are Divine gifts. There is a voice of God in both; and the voice of God is always consistent with itself.

If this be true, it must be possible to see the fallacy of such assertions as we have quoted. Human faculties are incompetent to judge of the whole truth of the Most High; but they are able to criticise their own assumptions. If they can not always demonstrate the dogmas of infidelity to be the exact opposite of the truth, they can always show them to be unwarranted.[1] Reason may destroy their influence, by showing that they reach beyond the sphere of knowledge. It can not know all things, but it may approximate to the limits of the knowable, and may require others to confine themselves within these limits. Granted that these are subjects on which we soon arrive at the confines of knowledge—granted that the depths of being are unfathomable, and the line of our understanding but very short; yet, though we can not sound the abyss of mystery, we may have a good idea of the length of our line. And nothing can be more important in the philosophy of religion, than to guard against the dangers of skepticism by indicating the limits of the comprehensible.

It will be the aim of the following Book to point out the unreasonable character of recent attacks upon revealed doctrines, and to bring to light the theory of Evil implied, though not enunciated; that we may view it face to face with the just conclusions of reason and the declarations of Holy Writ. We shall find that modern schemes of infidelity are, in fact, old systems long since disposed of, and appearing in a new disguise. Error is ever changing its motley garb. Drive it from one post which it has proclaimed impregnable, and it soon appears, with no less confidence, in another.

4. The question of the origin of evil is closely related to our knowledge on all the Attributes of the Almighty, but especially

[1] "Pour moi, j'avoue que je ne saurois être du sentiment de ceux qui soutiennent qu'une vérité peut souffrir des objections invincibles." Leibnitz, Théodicée, Discours, etc., 25.

His Power and Goodness. It has often been stated, after a heathen skeptic, as a dilemma between limited Power and limited Goodness in the Creator.[1]

Many and various solutions of the difficulty have been proposed. Numerous attempts have been made to answer the demand—Whence the existence of evil in the universe of a God of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness? On all the answers which have obtained currency, it was summarily remarked by Bayle,[2] that "the origin of evil is both inexplicable and incomprehensible," and that "all objections to the reasons for it are more agreeable to natural light than these reasons themselves."

This opinion of Bayle's has had great influence in the world since it was written, and appears still to express the most popular view of the subject. To the former clause no objection can be made, provided it be restricted to mean that no conceivable theory can be known to give a perfect solution of the difficulty. But the language of Bayle, and especially the latter clause, though it agrees very well with his undecided philosophy, is not a satisfactory statement of the case. It will be a principal purpose of this chapter to show, that the reason and explanation which have been most frequently given, especially by Christian writers, and never more distinctly than by those of the earliest centuries — that in which the best thinkers of all ages have been content to rest — is

[1] Lactantius (de Ira Dei, cap. xiii.) has, "Deus, inquit Epicurus, aut vult tollere mala, et non potest; aut potest, et non vult; aut neque vult, neque potest; aut et vult, et potest. Si vult et non potest, imbecillis est, quod in Deum non redit; si potest et non vult, invidus, quod æque alienum a Deo; si neque vult neque potest, et invidus et imbecillis, ideoque neque Deus. Si vult et potest, quod solum Deo convenit, unde ergo sunt mala, aut cur illa non tollit?" The answer of Lactantius is to the effect—"Si tollantur mala, tolli pariter sapientiam, nec ulla in homine virtutis remanere vestigia. . . . Constat igitur omnia propter hominem proposita, tam mala, quam etiam bona."

[2] Dict., art. "Paulicians." When this chapter was written, I was not aware of the complete demolition of Bayle's "insolvable objections," in the "Theodicæa" of Leibnitz. Hitherto the objections have had more influence than the answers to them. It saves thought and trouble, to conclude that difficulties are inexplicable. But the wisdom of Leibnitz still belongs to the future.

more agreeable to natural light than any objection which can be brought against it.

It is proposed to show that there is one answer, which, though it can not pretend to be a dogmatic solution of the question why and how evil has been introduced, is yet sufficient to meet every objection it can furnish to the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God—an answer perfectly agreeable to reason in itself, and which remains unanswered, because the replies which have been alleged against it are founded on inadmissible assumptions.

It will be borne in mind that we are now considering the question as one of natural religion, without reference to revelation. To answer rational objections to revealed doctrines, reason must be set against itself. Its legitimate conclusions can not be in collision with the Word of God.

5. On most of the numerous answers which the question has received from time immemorial, it will not be necessary to dwell. The world is not likely to see a revival of dualism; neither of that form of it, which makes the eternal principle of evil to reside in an eternal malignant being, nor of that which places it in the untractableness of eternal matter. These notions were once very prevalent as attempted solutions of the question. It was one of the first resources of imperfect theism to regard the Benificent Creator as limited by self-existent evil, and therefore less than Absolute Omnipotence. Evil, it is evident, does exist; it can not have originated itself; it can not have been created by God; it must therefore contain a self-existent and eternal principle, whether this be something living or dead.

6. To this theory the answer ascribed to Basil is sufficient, as far as it goes. Evil, it is said, is no real thing, but a mere negation. It exists in finite beings, but has no foundation of its existence in God. This may be known to be true. It may generally be seen to consist in a confusion introduced into the relations of things, which are not evil in their essential nature. It is often produced by those powers of finite beings, which must have been communicated by God, and are always capable of a good application, and intended to have their proper use.

It was observed in the preceding chapter, that the permanent

arrangements and laws of nature lie unchanged beneath the confusion of evil. Disease, famine, and the rest of the ills to which flesh is heir, are not inherent in the constitution of things, nor the results of any contrivance, or any agent of nature which is evil in itself, but arise from derangement or disturbance of its ordinary course. They are constantly to be traced to our own misconduct; and there can be little doubt that all the ills which shorten life have originated in transgression of the organic laws. Death, indeed, is a law of nature; but considered in itself, independently of all the causes of premature old age and extinction, we have no right to consider it an evil. By the light of revelation, it is seen to be an evil; but on grounds of reason, we can say no more than that nature bestows on man a life which has its term, and which must ultimately cease, through the natural and painless decay of prolonged old age.

In the physical world, evil is nothing real, but a confusion of things real. The same is true of the moral world. No power of man's nature is evil of itself. God has bestowed on him no faculties of mind or body, and allows him to possess none, but such as have their good application, and are intended for their proper use.

It is true that man is naturally prone to evil. This is a matter of experience, as well as a truth of Scripture. But it does not mean that he possesses any powers or faculties which are essentially evil, but that he is prone to misapply his good powers, and to transgress the bounds of temperance imposed by nature.

Reason and revelation concur in the truth, that *God is the only Creator*;[1] that the powers of nature and of man, however they may be disordered and misapplied, are none of them, in themselves, derived from any other. There is, therefore, no such thing as absolute evil. It neither exists independently, nor rests in the Infinite Being. It is not created by Him like mind and matter; nor is it an eternal law, having its origin and standard in any

[1] Ἐν ὑποστάσει καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὴν οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ κακία· Δημιουργὸς ποιητὴς τῶν ὅλων. Athan. Orat. c. vi.

Tertullian has a curious expression—"Deus auctor naturæ, diabolus interpolator." De cult. fœm. I. vii.

self-existent being. There is no such thing as a law of evil. It is always a violation of law. It exists only as a disturbance or confusion of things good. Thus far Basil's opinion is a competent answer to theories of dualism. The existence of evil need not be referred to an eternal being; it may be accounted for by the perversion of the powers of finite beings.

7. But the answer, though true thus far, does not approach the common difficulty of the subject. The question is—Why are finite beings permitted to disorder the works of God? Why do they possess so dangerous a power? It is no answer to this question to say, with some—The existence of evil is a greater glory to God, or a greater happiness to mankind, than its non-existence.

It is represented as a greater glory to God, in the doctrine of "the subordination of beings," so well criticised by Dr. Johnson, which can not be better stated than in the lines of Pope:

> "Of systems possible, if 'tis confess'd
> That Wisdom Infinite must form the best;
> Where all must full or not coherent be;
> And all that rises, rise in due degree;
> Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain
> There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man."

8. It is represented as a greater happiness to man in the notion of some weak Christians, who, thinking themselves to be, by arbitrary appointment, the peculiar favorites of heaven, forget that the Father of all is no respecter of persons, and fall into unworthy opinions of the Divine Nature. This notion is briefly expressed by an early Church writer—"*Felix culpa, quæ talem Redemptorem meruit;*" to which Bayle has replied in a short comparison, less reverent than it is forcible and difficult to answer.

Another theory, to be classed under this head, is to the effect that the existence of evil makes the good to be more enjoyed. This has even been supposed to be a sufficient account of the final ruin of the wicked; a notion, which, it is a shame to say, has had its advocates among modern Christians. Thus Mr. Parker quotes from Jonathan Edwards—"The destruction of the unfruitful is of use, to give the saints a greater sense of their own happiness, and of God's grace to them." "Every time they look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of

God in making them so to differ." When Mr. Parker quotes these inhuman and detestable sentiments, and holds them up to odium, he is quite within the province of human judgment. Man may know enough of himself to be sure that the misery of others can never increase his happiness. He may know that such thoughts are unworthy of the Supreme Being. Conscience, reason, and human nature cry out against them. Even the language of Mr. Parker is not exaggerated when applied to such sentiments as these.

To all such theories one answer may be returned. God is Infinite; and Infinite Goodness will extend to every finite being, and will provide for the happiness of all. He is omnipresent in His agency, universal in His Love to His creatures. His Work is manifest in the least monad that exists, no less than in the brightest star of the sky. His beneficent Power issues forth in creation, to the least, as well as to the greatest of His works — to the meanest creature of the earth, and to the highest Archangel of heaven. As nothing is too great for His Infinity, so nothing is too minute for His Omnipresence. He is good to all His creatures, and has provided for the well-being and happiness of all. This doctrine of theism is that of natural and revealed religion. No other is consistent with any worthy conception of the Divine Perfections.

9. Whence, then, evil? In considering the question of Free-will, we found reason to conclude that man possesses an originating power of action. The origin of evil has often been referred to this faculty of created beings. Writers who have rejected all theories which make God the Author of evil, have been content to lay it to the charge of finite wills, and have thought it possible, by this means, to reconcile the prevalence of mischief with the perfections of the Creator.[1]

It has been proposed to show that no valid objection can be

[1] Two other decisions on the question of evil are extant: that of Cicero in his de Nat. Deor., where he answers the difficulties of Cotta with the words—"Quoniam advesperascit dabis nobis diem aliquem, ut contra ista dicamus;" and that of Mr. Babbage in the "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise," which is much to the same effect. Many readers will regard these as the wisest answers.

made to this solution of the difficulty, and to give reasons for declining to admit those objections to it, which have been said by Bayle to be "more suited to human capacity, and more founded on our good sense and ideas of order."

10. One of the objections alleged by Bayle is altogether at variance with good sense, and opposed to every conception of the Author of all order. "Divine helps," he says, "seasonably bestowed, and acting on our will, would keep us from danger, yet leave us free." It is quite within the limits of knowledge to see with certainty that such Divine helps could not proceed from an Unchangeable Creator. He is not a Being who can have recourse to partial contrivances and temporary expedients. He can not fail in His purposes, nor see them turn out contrary to His expectation. If He have created man to be free, it is as little to be expected that He will interfere with his free agency to keep him from falling, as that He will suspend the law of gravitation to save the head of one who madly throws himself down a precipice. If He have determined eternally to endow a creature with the likeness of His own originating power, it is impossible that He can interfere to prevent that power from being abused.[1]

11. Another objection alleged against the explanation of evil by the misapplication of free-will in finite beings, is to the effect that an infinitely wise Creator knew beforehand the use to which His gifts would be applied; and if infinitely good, would have bestowed no gift so fatal to its possessors, as freedom is found to be to mankind. Freedom is a high and noble faculty to those who use it well; but to the great mass of men it brings mischief and misery in the present, and, revelation assures us, miserable ruin in the future. Who would not forfeit the gift on condition that he should be raised by Divine Power to the highest excellence of which his nature, without will, would be capable? Who would not prefer to live forever in that dependent blessedness which must belong to beings incapable of resisting the Will of God?

Why, then, has so fatal a gift been communicated to those who

[1] "Puta intercessisse, puta rescidisse illum arbitrii libertatem, dum revocat ab arbore, nonne exclamaret Marcion; O Dominum futilem, instabilem, infidelem, rescindentem quæ instituit." Tertullian adv. Marc. ii. 7.

were so likely to abuse it, and whose misapplication of it must have been foreseen? Is not the communication of a power so dangerous inconsistent either with the Wisdom or with the Goodness of the Creator?

12. To these questions it may be answered, that their objection is one which we may reasonably decline to entertain, because it is founded on assumptions which go beyond the limits of possible knowledge. It is not the part of the creature to demand of the Creator—Why hast thou made me thus? The question is not only irreverent, it is irrational.

The existence of evil is a truth of experience: the free-will of finite beings, its assumed explanation, may be said to be a second truth of experience. Evil is continually seen to be the result of free-will; and to give this account of its origin, is within the limits of the comprehension. But to demand that the dangerous gift shall be reconciled with the perfections of the Creator, is manifestly to pass beyond these limits. It may be according to human notions of goodness to withhold a gift which we know will be misapplied; but to measure the Divine agency by our views of goodness, is plainly to go beyond our province. We can not state it as a universal rule, that to bestow a gift which we know will be abused, is in every case an act of unkindness. The donor may have good reasons for bestowing it—there may be circumstances which would justify him in our opinion, if they were known. If it be difficult, then, as we know it is, to pronounce judgment on the actions of a man, it is infinitely more difficult to constitute ourselves judges of God.

Thus far we have declined to entertain the objection to the free-will solution, because we can not know the circumstances of the case; it may be answered yet farther, that we can not even know the objection to have any meaning. It appears, no doubt, to present to the mind a possible alternative to the existence of evil; but the mind can, by no means, know it to be an alternative which is possible in the nature of things. The objection pretends to touch a question on the constitution of things, and the conditions of creation. It is not enough, then, that it gives us a conceivable notion; we must know that the notion can be realized.

But this knowledge is beyond us. We have perfect evidence of the *fact* that all things are the works of God; but *we know nothing of the conditions and possibilities of creation.*

To entertain any objection to the constitution of created beings, reason must be competent to understand the Divine operation, and to search the Mystery of the Divine Will and Nature. The Author of creation is Self-existent, and the necessity of His Nature lies beneath that Almighty agency which is determined by His Eternal Attributes, and fills the universe with wonders. Of the manner of His operation—of his Eternal Will and Nature, we can know no more than that He can not be constrained by external necessity, and that, within Himself, there is no such thing as mechanical necessity, nor an evolution of being similar to any material developments. When we consider the mystery of the human will, we may well decline to dogmatize on the Divine Will.

13. *We know nothing of the conditions and possibilities of creation.* When it is demanded why created beings possess the dangerous faculty of free-will, it may be answered, from our human point of view, by another question—How can we know that intelligent beings could exist at all, without that self-originating power which we call *will?* We are accustomed in thought to separate will and intelligence; and express, by these names, two classes of facts which the mind can consider as distinct. But it does not follow that they are really distinct and separable faculties. On the contrary, we have had good reasons, in the former part of this treatise, for concluding that there can be no such thing as intelligence, no first principles of knowledge, no perception of one's self as a being distinct from the world, indeed nothing more than the bare sensibility which belongs to the lowest creatures, without the possession of that very power of will which is the source of evil.

It would seem, in short, that as far as we can know there are reasons for concluding the only alternative to the possibility of evil to be extreme pantheism; and that, without independent energy of the created soul, there could be no such thing as a distinctness of being between the creature and the Creator, no distinct intelligence nor personality of the finite creature.[1]

[1] It is curious that Bayle, after his refutation of Spinozism, falls into

The irreverent demand of skepticism—"Why hast Thou made me thus?" may therefore be tantamount to the question—"Why hast Thou created me at all?" Nor, indeed, will extreme skepticism shrink from giving utterance to it, even in this form. But it is not less irrational than it is irreverent. It is too much to demand that God should restrain the energy of His Eternal Being, and keep back forever the manifestations of His Glory in heaven and earth, lest some of His creatures should abuse the gifts which He bestows. It is beyond all modesty to expect that His Power shall never be Creative—that He shall exist eternally without His works, lest the willfully impious and immoral should suffer the consequences of their own misconduct. It is contrary to reason, because, even if it can be supposed, according to any human conceptions of Infinite Power and Goodness, that the creation might not have taken place, or might have been different from what it is, yet we can have no means of knowing that our human conceptions are correspondent to the Truth of the Divine Nature. *For any thing reason can discover* to the contrary, Infinite Power may have been necessarily determined by Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, both to create the universe, and to create it such as it is. This answer is not proposed as the true solution of the difficulty. We have declined to dogmatize on the Divine Will. It is an answer to the rationalist on his own ground, and is a sufficient reason for declining to admit his objection. That it involves nothing inconsistent with any true conception of the Divine Perfections, will presently be observed more at length.

14. But another question remains. Suppose it to be true that there could be no existence of creatures distinct from the Deity, without the communication of powers which it must be possible for them to misapply; still, it has sometimes been alleged, since Perfect Beauty, and Holiness, and Goodness belong to the Divine Nature—since God is the Source of all perfection—He must be able to captivate the souls of all the creatures—and to bind them

something very like it, in his arguments upon this subject. He says—"According to our idea of a created being, we can not understand that it can be a principle of action, that it can move itself, and create in itself any modalities by a power peculiar to itself." Art. "Paulicians," note F.

to Himself by motives of admiration, and adoration, and love, stronger than any temptation to turn aside.

But here again reason is beyond itself, since it can not know that what it demands lies within the eternal possibilities of things. Here, as before, the rationalist may be answered on his own ground, that, for any thing he can know to the contrary, it is possible that all creation is of necessity a development from the lower to the higher, and that no existing being does or can come into existence in the full possession of its powers. This is the rule of nature in all our experience. Every human being gains the use of his faculties by intercourse with the world. The great globe itself has advanced, through many revolutions, from a primeval condition certainly less complex than its present state. Human faculties can not discover but that it may be the necessary rule, that creation is, in all cases, a gradual process. It may therefore be an impossibility in the nature of things, that man, in the commencement of his being, should have been able to comprehend the Beauty of Holiness, and the Loveliness of the Supreme Good; or to admit the influence of those high motives, which must have constrained him, if he had felt them, to act otherwise than he does.[1]

It is the declaration of Holy Writ: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." For any thing that man can ascertain to the contrary, this may not only be a truth of fact, but an essential necessity of things. It may be as necessary for all created beings, to gain, by the life of prayer and work, the power of comprehending the attainable blessedness and excellence of their future condition, as it is necessary for man, as he is, to gain the use of his faculties, only through intercourse with the world. There is nothing within the limits of human knowledge to make us assume it possible that any created being could, even through Divine Power, spring all at once into the fullness of intellectual and moral life.

15. But we must also take account of Revelation. When rea-

[1] On this question, and its relation to the Divine Omnipotence, Irenæus has, Θεῷ ὡς πρὸς ἑαυτὸν πάντα δυνατά· Οἷός τε ἦν παρασχεῖν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ τέλειον, ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἀδύνατος λαβεῖν αὐτό. (Adv. Hær. iv. 73.)

son is found incompetent to judge of the possibilities of creation, it may be the next resource of skepticism to quote revelation against itself. Was not Adam created by the Word of God in the perfection of the Divine Image? And are there not angels, and orders of heavenly beings superior to man, who never knew the state of human weakness and infirmity; who were always, from their birth as sons of God, far exalted above the weakness and frailty of mankind?

Granted. But is it an impossibility, even for beings thus high and perfect, to fall into opposition to the Will of God? On the contrary, revelation also teaches us that the origin of evil was with the angels, and spread from them to human kind. And it discovers the consequences of evil to them, to have been far more fatal than to man. This is what reason might anticipate. However high and noble the nature of created beings, there is always an infinite distance between them and God. Though they may possess faculties capable of infinite development, and, through eternal ages, may perpetually be rising above themselves, yet there is always an abyss of mystery beneath the finite, always a perfection of glory and beauty which is far above out of their sight. There would seem, then, to be always a possibility that they might sin against the Creator, by reaching to mysteries unknown, and arrogating to themselves the prerogatives of the Infinite. It is also to be anticipated that the effects of sin in creatures so exalted, if not even irremediable, would be far more pernicious than to the frailty and feebleness of humanity.

If it be imagined that the Creator might have placed us in a state less liable to error, it must be remembered that if to sin be unavoidable, the consequences of sin are not fatal; the remedy is within our reach, and is of universal efficacy. It may be the fact, and, for any thing we can tell, the necessary fact, that we owe these advantages, under the Divine Goodness, to the weakness and imperfection of our nature.

Before we affirm that it would have been better for us, upon the whole, and with reference to our eternal existence, had the Creator placed us, from the first, in a higher and less imperfect condition, it would be well to consider whether it would have been better for

us as men, to have come at once into the world, in the fullness of bodily and mental strength, without the previous weakness and education of childhood—in all the energy of fresh self-will, and under the strong incentives to novelty, without the education of childhood, or the acquired power of self-control. It might be a curious inquiry what would be the result of such a state, and whether it could even continue. It may possibly be the fact, that our present imperfection, and our inability to comprehend the high things of God, may be as necessary in the scheme of our immortal existence as the helplessness of childhood in the economy of human life. There is reason in the Christian precept, that man must become as a little child.

16. Some observations will hereafter be made on the Divine Purpose, discovered to us in Scripture, in the present existence of man, as a weak and fallible creature. It appears evident, from what has been said, that our natural faculties and means of knowledge can not warrant the conclusion, that any state of existence, if even possible in itself, could be more desirable, as the commencement of immortal being, than this present life. It must, therefore, be going beyond our limits to say, according to the common assertions on this subject, that God preferred the existence of sin to a sinless universe; or might have been more beneficent to His creatures, had He withheld from them a gift which, He must have foreseen, would be abused; or had He drawn and influenced them by constraining motives of the true, the beautiful, and the good. To make such assertions, we must first have solved the unfathomable question of the Divine Will, and must have gained an acquaintance with the realities and possibilities of creation. All we can say is, that in the necessary Existence of the Supreme Being and the manner of His agency; in the dependence of the finite upon the Infinite, and the necessary relations of finite things to one another, certain conditions are to be satisfied, to give the possibility of creation. Reason is incompetent to make any objection to the constitution of things. because these conditions are utterly unknown.

17. It remains briefly to notice the question, whether the notion of necessity, in any conditions of creation, involve any thing inconsistent with the Perfect and Infinite Attributes of the Creator. If

it do, we fail to silence the skeptical cavil, that "the objections to reasons for the existence of evil are more agreeable to natural light than these reasons themselves." It can not be difficult to show, that there is nothing derogatory to Infinite Power or Goodness, in regarding the possibility of evil as necessarily implied in the very existence of a distinct created being.

Not to the Divine Omnipotence. For even *Omnipotence can not work contradictions.* This is universally allowed, or, rather, it is a mere truism. But it is important to observe, what is the root of the whole difficulty, that this word *contradiction*, when applied to the works of God, must not be restricted to its human sense; otherwise we limit the possibilities of Infinite Power by the conceptions of the finite mind. The postulate holds good, no doubt, with reference to the human faculties, because we are warranted in assuming their veracity, and regard them, *within their province*, as capable judges of what is true. But it is only within their province. They can know but a limited and small portion of universal truth. Hence that which is contradictory to the human mind is impossible, but it does not include all impossibilities. *The perfect measure of possibility is the Intelligence of the Divine Mind;* and the impossible is what is contradictory to the Divine Intelligence. Hence when it is said that God is Omnipotent, it is meant that He is the Source of all power that is or can be. Infinite Power is no mere figment of human conception, but extends to the infinite possibilities of things, with reference to the Infinite Mind.

This conclusion appears to be, in effect, equivalent to the opinion of various writers upon the subject of evil—that for instance of Soame Jenyns, whose observations upon this point met with the censure of Dr. Johnson. But this part of the illustrious Doctor's criticism has had more influence than it deserves.

"Omnipotence," says Jenyns, "can not work contradictions; it can only effect all possible things. But so little are we acquainted with the whole system of nature, that we know not what are possible and what are not; but . . . we have reason to conclude, that to endue created beings with perfection, that is, to produce good exclusive of evil, is one of those impossibilities which even Infinite Power can not accomplish."

"This," remarks Johnson, "is elegant and acute"—a more just observation than some which follow—"but will by no means calm discontent, or silence curiosity; for whether evil can be wholly separated from good or not, it is plain that they may be mixed in various degrees, and, as far as human eyes can judge, the degree of evil might have been less without any impediment to good."

To this it may be answered with certainty, that human eyes ought to see their incompetency to judge of the matter at all. Johnson here falls into the very common confusion between the subjective and the objective—between our possible conceptions of things and the possibilities of the things themselves. We see good and evil variously mixed and in different degrees; we can *conceive* that what we see to be varied might perhaps be infinitely varied; we can conceive that the creation might have been very different from what it is. But our conceptions are no measure of the conditions of creation, or of the possibilities of things. We have no right to argue from our possible conceptions, that the Creator might have placed us in a more desirable state of existence, till we know it to fall objectively within the infinite sphere of possibility. It would seem, in short, that the observation of Jenyns contains enough to calm all reasonable discontent, and to silence all reasonable curiosity upon the subject.

18. Nor can the notion of necessity in the conditions of creation be inconsistent with the Attribute of Infinite Goodness. The Infinite Attributes are all in harmony, or, rather, all in unity with one another. Love and Holiness must be One and inseparable in the Deity. But human knowledge is discursive, and proceeds by partial views. Considering the Divine Attributes as distinct, it is obliged to regard them as limiting one another—the Infinite limiting the Infinite. Our modes of thought can thus be but distant shadows of the truth. We may avoid the solecism by regarding the manifestation of Infinite Love as always in accordance with the law of universal order. The Love of God does not cease to be Infinite, because it is in accordance with His Holiness; nor because it tends to what is best upon the whole.

Infinite Goodness, then, does not confer universal and unconditional happiness on every creature. It is the inexhaustible Source

of all possible blessedness, and provides for the happiness of every creature, in subordination to the harmony of the universe. It is in the moral nature of man that natural religion finds its only assurance that the Divine Care extends to individuals. God has implanted the sense of right in the heart, and has thereby given the assurance that He will deal equitably with all. The conviction may often be feeble, till it finds support in revelation.

19. It will have been seen that free-will has not been alleged as a dogmatic solution of the difficulties which attend the existence of evil, but as the best attainable by man, and one to which no reasonable answer can be made. The full solution of the question may be wholly beyond the reach of the faculties. This may suffice to obviate all objections to the Divine Perfections. Man has evidences, in himself and in nature, that the Creator is infinitely powerful and good. The existence of evil can not set aside this conclusion. It may show that Infinite Power and Goodness are not to be measured by finite conceptions, and are not mere extensions of human qualities. It may prove His Nature and Agency to be above the thoughts of man, His Infinite Perfections to be incomprehensible. It can not prove them to be finite. As reason demonstrates His Existence, though it can not search the mysteries of His Nature; so it concludes that He is infinitely powerful and good, though it can gain but a faint and distant view of Infinite Power and Goodness.

20. To sum up the chief objections which may be alleged. If it be argued, that reason is competent to infer the Character of the Creator from the ills of life, as well as from the manifestations of His Wisdom and Benevolence; it may be answered, that these are evinced in the abiding frame of nature, and in the essential properties and laws which make up the constitution of things, while evil is, at the most, a deprivation of good. If it be rejoined, that, at least, we thus impose limitations on the Divine Power and Goodness, it may be answered, that the limitations belong only to the constitution of created things, and may be inseparable from it. If it be asserted that many evils might be removed, without the introduction of greater evils, we may reply, that our view is too limited to discover the effects of partial changes to universal

nature. If, that Infinite Goodness must extend, not only to the universal frame, but to every creature, it does extend to every creature. If this opinion be declared inconsistent with facts, then the life present must be inconsiderable, compared with the life to come. Infinite Equity requires it. If it be thought that all the creatures might have been drawn to goodness, by inspiring motives of the Divine Nature, it must be called to mind that we are imperfect judges of the Divine Conduct, and can not know the assumption to be either possible in the nature of things, or, on the whole, to be desired, if it were. If it be insisted that the ills of life are so great, and the abuse of free-will so universal, that it had been better to have kept back the gift from man, it is a sufficient answer, that we do not know whether, without it, man could have existed at all. If that occasional Divine helps might have kept the will upright, the conception is unworthy of the Divine Conduct, nor can we know what would have been the results of such a system. If the skeptic go the length of asserting, that, in the view of all the ills of life and death, it had been better that the human race had never existed, the answer is still more conclusive, —man is responsible for his willful deeds, and the willfully impious has no right to demand that the agency of the Creator shall be restrained, or the happiness of eternal life kept back from the righteous, that he may not suffer the consequences of his own actions. We have repudiated the unrighteous notion that God has willed the ruin of any, to increase the happiness of the rest. It were equally unjust, for the sake of the vicious, to withhold life and happiness from the virtuous.

21. The practical conclusion is obvious. We can not know what might have been, but we see clearly what is. We can not fathom the mystery of iniquity to its origin. Experience gives us no information; conscience is silent; Scripture does not satisfy curiosity. But we see that we are able to do evil; experience, conscience, and Scripture concur, that its worst injury is to ourselves. They declare that God abideth Holy, and has given us some power of coming nearer to the law of harmony and holiness. It is the practical lesson of all religion, natural and revealed— live by *the law of love to God and man* and evil will not hurt you.

Even suffering will cease to injure; it will elevate and purify the soul, and will work out the high destiny appointed it. The heathen Stoic could repay himself for suffering by the pride of self-esteem, and the complacency of conscience. Even he conjectured that the Spirit of God dwells with the virtuous, and could live in active goodness and equanimity. It should not be difficult to the Christian, to whom the truth is something more than a conjecture. He need not be disquieted by the ills of time, nor anxious about the destinies of eternity. He may trust in God and be at peace. He need not have recourse to uncertain fancies, such as that of "the neutral angels," who neither stood nor fell; nor seek, in a state prior to life, to account for the inequalities of the present. His eye is toward the future. He is satisfied that God knows all things, and will set all things right. It is enough that He is the Eternal Lord, as well as the Lord of this life of time. Suffering in time is without rule that we can perceive, and points to a future judgment in righteousness. Suffering in eternity can not befall us, but through our own fault. Of this truth the soul may find an evidence in itself. If it suffer, it will be self-condemned. The Eternal Lord is the Creator of this life of time. TIME IS SHORT, ETERNITY IS LONG.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

1. Limitations of Divine Knowledge.—2. The Divine Glory.—3. The Divine Attributes.—4. Self-existence.—5. Freedom.—6. Immutability.—7. Omnipresence, Omniscience, Omnipotence.—8. Omniscience by physical Causes.—9. Foreknowledge.

1. THE evidences of theism establish the truth, that the universe has been created and ordered with Intelligent Purpose, and that its Author is a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.

It has been shown that all knowledge of existence can be no more than relative. The Absolute, or Internal Nature of the Deity is necessarily unknown and incomprehensible. He is known as the real Cause of things visible, but only in an indirect way—

through His relations to man, and by means of the manifestations of Power and Goodness, in creation and in redemption.

Of the Internal Nature of the Godhead, natural religion can give only a negative knowledge; or, can use positive language, which is but partially or metaphorically applicable. Negatively, it excludes from the Infinite Being all the imperfections of finite beings; metaphorically, the Incommunicable Glory may be imaged under the figure of Light. Human words are sometimes employed, which are but partially applicable; the word *Person*, for instance, can not be understood to transfer to the Infinite Being those conditions and limitations of time and place which are inseparable from the notion of finite personality.

2. Our negative knowledge of the Mysterious Nature of the Deity, may be comprised under the Attribute of the Divine Glory, or Blessedness. This is generally accounted by theological writers to be a distinct Attribute of the Most High. Perhaps it would be more correct to regard it as the Unity and Perfection of His Nature, in all its Attributes known and unknown, than an Attribute which can be conceived as distinct. The Divine Nature may be known to possess unity and harmony in itself. The Attributes of the Self-existent can not fall into disorder or inconsistency with one another. They can never cross nor thwart one another, nor be subject to struggle for predominance, like the various affections of man.

In the Unity of His Nature then, the Supreme Source of all perfection must be regarded as containing in Himself a certain Fullness, and self-Sufficiency, and Glory. The riches of creation are indications of the eternal riches of His Being. The Power and Wisdom displayed throughout the universe must have issued forth from boundless resources, which we can not but conceive to be infinite. But we can form no positive conceptions of the Divine Glory, [except with reference to its manifestations in creation; unless revelation discover that any affection, similar to those of man, as Love, for instance, is an Eternal Attribute of the Divine Blessedness. We shall find reasons in Holy Scripture for believing it to be an eternal truth, not altogether beyond the limits of positive knowledge, that *God is Love.*

It may be questioned, however, whether there be warrant in reason or revelation for expressions not infrequent, as that God loves Himself with an Infinite Love, or delights eternally in His own perfections. Such statements, if not irreverent, seem to exceed the limits of the understanding.[1] We may know from creation that He delights in the order and harmony of His works, and that the Law of Order has its residence in His Eternal Nature; but of any Divine Affections prior to creation, natural religion can give us no information.

3. The Nature of the Deity can be viewed by man only under several distinct Attributes. Without presuming to comprehend the Divine Nature, or to measure the Infinite by human conceptions or classifications, we may think of Him as ONE INFINITE SPIRIT, known under the Attributes of *Self-existence*, *Freedom*, *Immutability*; *Omnipresence*, *Omniscience*, *Omnipotence*; *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, and *Love*. These words may include all the knowledge we can possess of the Divine Nature.

4. Dr. Clarke defines the idea of a Self-existing Being, to be that of a Being, the supposition of whose non-existing is an express contradiction.[2] This definition is not free from the common confusion between outward truth and the mind's conceptions of it. A reality external to the mind may necessarily exist, and its contrary will then be an impossibility; but it does not follow that the *supposition* of this real impossibility is a contradiction. This depends upon the extent of the faculties. It must be so to sufficient intelligence, but it may be otherwise with the intelligence of man.

A similar remark applies to Dr. Clarke's observation, that this necessity must antecedently force itself upon us, whether we will or no, even when we are endeavoring to suppose that no such Being exists. It is true that the cultivated human mind always has the conception of the Self-Existent Being. But this is a matter of experience. It can not be assumed, except of infinite

[1] Thus Wegscheider has, "Deus suam perfectionem per intellectum plane cognoscit, et per voluntatem summe amat, inque ea pacate et quiete acquiescit; ex qua acquiescentia oritur gaudium, quo Deus se ipso, tanquam summo bono delectatur." Inst. Theol. cap. iii. § 75.

[2] Being and Attributes, § iii.

understanding, that it must know every necessity of things, and always perceive its opposite to be contradictory.

The Supreme Being must therefore be regarded as existing through the Internal, though Incomprehensible, Necessity of His Own Nature.

5. The Divine Freedom excludes all subjection to external constraint, and also to all internal connection of physical causes and relations. The Creator acts with Intelligence and wise Purpose, and according to Eternal Holiness and Love. This truth is inconsistent with the notion of a being unfolding or developing in the universe, by any thing like physical evolution. The Mystery of the Divine Will, and its relation to the Eternal Nature of the Most High, has been regarded as beyond our sphere.

6. The Immutability of the Deity is included in His superiority to relations of time. Change implies progression of time, and is therefore excluded from the Nature of Him who is above time. There is an inherent absurdity in the conception of eternal and necessary change. Reason claims to rest upon the Unchangeable, and looks to God as superior to all succession of qualities, as One who changes not.

7. The Omnipresence, Omniscience, and Omnipotence of the Deity are included in His Infinity. Superior to relations of space, He can not be confined within limits, but must be present at every point of space. Superior to relations of time, He embraces, in one eternal present, the past, the present, and the future of His creatures; and sees always, and at once, all things which are, have been, or shall be. Superior to relations of causality, originating, but not acted upon from without, He is the Source of all power, and therefore Almighty. The notion of a universal Creator implies that of Power superior to all the powers of the universe. From the manifestation of stupendous power in nature, the mind can not help rising to the notion of Omnipotence, and regards the Creator of all worlds as the Originator of all things which exist or can exist. It can form no conception of His relations to space and time, but such as makes him omnipresent and omniscient. Space can not separate Him from things therein, nor time from *things past* or future. However incomprehensible to finite beings,

He is present in every point of space, as much as if that point were all; and all duration is one present eternity with Him.

8. The Divine Omniscience is sometimes understood to consist in the power of reading the past, in all its effects which remain in the present; in the same way that Foreknowledge is placed in the knowledge of all present causes, in their subtile nature and connections, and in all the potency which belongs to them. These causes, it is thought, may result in all the existences, and all the events of the future.

This notion of Omniscience of the past has been developed into a physical theory of the Divine Omniscience, founded on the truth, that the light by which bodies are seen—or any other of the movements of the universe—is not propagated instantaneously, but occupies a certain time in its transmission; and, consequently, that as sound is not heard at a distance till after the explosion which caused it, so, at large distances, events will not be seen till long after they are past. From the moon, for instance, they will be seen within a second; from the sun, not till after eight minutes; from the distant planets not till some hours has elapsed; and from the stars, only after some years; or, it may be, from stars of the sixteenth or twentieth magnitude, after many ages. Hence it needs but an organ of sight of the same kind as that of man, only infinitely more acute and powerful, to be able, from some distance in space, to behold, as if it were present in time, any event of the world's history.

9. We need not dwell on this idle speculation, except to observe, that its application to the Divine Omniscience of the past may be quite as reasonable, as any attempt by means of physical causes, to explain the foreknowledge of things to come. This notion has been adopted by some writers, who have consistently maintained, that what is now known as certain must now be determined as certain, and that foreknowledge must necessarily imply foreappointment. Others, recoiling from fatalism and its consequences, have sought to defend human liberty by the denial of the Divine Omniscience, alleging that God *may* know all things, but does not; just as he may do all things possible, but does not. It is sometimes said to be a contradiction, to affirm that a thing is known as

certain, while it remains uncertain. The most complete and certain knowledge, they say, of a free agent who is yet indeterminate, is to know him as indeterminate, till he make his choice. But these notions are little consistent either with any reasonable conceptions of the Absolute Being, or with the scriptural statements of His Omniscience.

Others, as Dr. Clarke, have more wisely sought to evade the difficulty, by affirming that Foreknowledge can have no more influence on things future, than knowledge on things past; affirming that God certainly knows all things beforehand, and this without compromise of man's freedom; but declining all question as to the *how*.

There can be little doubt of the truth of this opinion. To suppose the Supreme Being knows future events only in their present causes, is to limit His Nature to our human conceptions of time. But if He be transcendent to all conditions of time, we may then conceive the whole eternal course of present, past, and future to be spread eternally before Him, and all the events of time, with all their causes and connections, including the loose chains, and broken links, and accidental knots, which make up the tangled web of human life, at once manifest to His eyes, yet as independent, in their connection, of all Influence from the Omniscient, as the several articles which lie together on a table are independent of the mind which views them. This, no doubt, is to make the Divine Omniscience Incomprehensible. And it may be expected that the Divine Foreknowledge will lie beyond the human understanding.

But although the Divine Attributes are unsearchable, yet they become easily intelligible in their results and manifestations. It is a truth which intimately concerns us, that God is not far from every one of us; that He hears every secret prayer, and sees every past action of my life, as though I were doing it now; that He knows each action, from its secret source within to all its manifold results, and is perfectly acquainted with all I can do or suffer, to all future periods of my being.

BOOK IV.

SCRIPTURAL REVELATION OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER. OBJECTIONS OF MODERN DEISM.

CHAPTER I.

EVIDENCES AND INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

1. Mankind expect a Revelation.—2. Relation of natural to revealed Religion. — 3. Evidences of revealed Religion. — 4. Agreement of sacred Writers.—5. Partiality of Revelation.—6. Interpretation of Scripture.

1. It is a natural anticipation of the heart, that the Eternal Father will break the silence of nature, and reveal Himself more immediately to His creatures. He is manifested in nature and in the soul of man. But the universal expectation of the world looks for a more direct communication of His Will, a more immediate assurance of His Love. We may know Him in nature, by that evidence which is most trustworthy in our knowledge of man—the evidence of deeds. But the happiness of life consists in the interchange of affection, of sympathy, of thought. The Good Creator has enabled His creatures thus to communicate with one another, through the Divine gift of language. This very gift creates the expectation, that He will converse with them as He has taught them to converse together. If He be not a blind energy of nature, but a Spirit of Life and Love, we may expect that His dealings with mankind will not be confined to manifestations of the laws and powers of nature, but will extend to that closer communion of mind with mind, which expresses itself in the symbols of human language.

This anticipation, it is sometimes said, has subjected mankind, in every age, to the designs of priestcraft and imposture. But it does not follow that every profession of Revelation is to be rejected without inquiry. Others, as well as Christians, have their re-

ligious books; but, previously to all examination of their claims, the most superficial knowledge of their influence in history should guard the candid writer from lightly classing together, as of equal value and authority, the Zend, the Koran, the Vedas, and the Bible. It is probable, before investigation, that the expectation of a Divine Revelation, which is so universal, and so easily imposed upon, is intended by the Creator to have its satisfaction. If there be a Desire of all nations, there is a strong probability that the Desire of all nations will come. Many false Christs may arise; but there is One True Christ, the Son of God.

The Bible professes to contain the Word of God to man, and Revelation of His Son to be the Saviour of the world. In directing attention to this Book of books, and especially to its discoveries of the Divine Character, we are met by one or two preliminary questions.

2. The first is one which has, of late, led to some discussion—the relation of natural to revealed religion. Many writers affirm that revelation is wholly inadmissible in the demonstration of the Existence of God. This truth, they say, must be established before we can listen to any claims of revelation. Others maintain revelation to be all-sufficient, and independent of any support from natural religion. On this question, it is necessary to distinguish between the spontaneous knowledge of the mind and its later scientific knowledge of reflection. Unquestionably it must possess its religious nature, and must have formed some idea of God, before it can even understand the assertion that the Bible is the Word of God. But it need not have demonstrated that He exists. To understand the Sacred Name, and to admit His Existence as a probable truth, is enough to place the mind in the posture which listens for information from without. Instinctive feelings, an unreflective belief, are, to the greater number of mankind, the only evidences that He exists, and are found sufficient to draw their attention to revelation. The internal testimonies of the Bible to its own veracity, its answer to the wants of the soul and the natural anticipations of the mind, may prove these anticipations to be true.

Our knowledge of God may here again be illustrated by our

knowledge of mankind. We do not require a strict demonstration of their existence, before we allow ourselves to listen to the conversation of our fellow-men. We must possess the intuitive knowledge of the distinction between what is self, and what is not self, but need not have examined the question—"What evidence have we that the outward form of a man corresponds to a real being, and is not a mere phantom of the imagination?"—before we are ready to hear him and to converse with him, and find, in the interchange of words and thought, the strongest evidence that he is a being like one's self.

Similarly of the Divine Existence. Few men have obtained a demonstration; but the religious nature, the spontaneous knowledge of the Supreme Being, is sufficient to engage the attention of the ignorant. They who gladly listen to His Voice in revelation will find, in its language to the soul, the most convincing evidence that He is.

It may be said, then, that the first evidences of the Being of God lie at the foundation of man's nature. They are found in reason and in feeling. They are then confirmed by observation of the world around. The universe is full of God. In its vastness, its powers, its beauties, its benevolent designs, it speaks of Him to the attentive. The double evidences thus derived from the nature of man and of the world, and their relations to one another, are farther confirmed by inspired testimonies. The Creator vouchsafes to reveal Himself in the constitution of man, in the creation which environs him, and in His written Word. The language of His word, in its relations to the soul, no less than the relations of the world to the intelligent nature of man, may testify that that word is true, when it affirms that He exists.

Theism is thus established by the consistency and harmony of evidences various and independent. Of these, the declarations of revealed religion are not the least forcible and important. Where external nature is silent, they sometimes supply the meaning to the subjective notions of the mind, or afford satisfaction to the doubts, an answer to the deep desires and aspirations of the soul.

3. The second preliminary question is that of the Christian evidences. It is foreign to our subject to examine any of the proofs

of revealed religion. It might be useful, if it fell within our scope, to point out how entirely the doctrines and truths of Holy Scripture respond to the wants of the soul. We might dwell on their perfect adaptation to human nature, their knowledge of man's weakness, and of his capabilities; their fitness to correct his debasing passions and sordid dispositions, as well as to purify his heart, and raise him to the perfection of his nature.

The Moral Law of the New Testament, though some writers have imagined they found imperfections, is now confessed, even by infidels, to possess the highest excellence. The Holy Scriptures may be said to have contained, for ages, a clearer knowledge of man's dispositions and wants than he has yet gained respecting himself. They contain rules and precepts which have, in all times, been opposed to the common judgment of mankind, but are at length, after many ages, acknowledged to be in accordance with truth.[1] Thus the Gospel has ever been in advance of the age.

4. But although it is foreign to our aim, to enter on the general question of the Christian evidences, yet we shall find valuable testimony to their truth in the perfect agreement and consistency of the different doctrines of Scripture which will be brought before us; and that, too, on deep and mysterious subjects, beyond the common thoughts and conceptions of mankind. It must be borne in mind that the Sacred Scriptures are from a large number of writers, many of them unlearned men, and of distant ages of the world. We may hear them, then, as unknown witnesses, and shall find ample evidence of their truthfulness in the consistency of their testimony. On the deep and difficult questions of the origin of evil, its remedy, the purpose of life, and the future destiny of man, every one knows how variable and inconsistent with one another are the systems of human philosophy. If, on such subjects, all the Scripture writers concur, as we shall find they do, in one mar-

[1] Thus on the preference of the Christian to the heroic character, Mr. Hennell, who rejects revealed religion, perceives that Jesus, in laying "particular stress on virtues of the meek and benevolent kind, accords strikingly with the advanced morality of the present age, which admits that the prevalence of these dispositions is the most essential requisite to the improvement of the world." (Christian Theism, so called, ed. 2, p. 8.)

velous story of many distinct parts, we shall have, in their agreement with one another, a strong evidence that they speak, what they profess to speak, the Truth of God.

5. The skeptic will sometimes express his wonder that God does not converse with all generations, nor reveal His Gospel equally to all. But it can be no imputation on the Divine Goodness, that a state of moral trial is one of difficulty and partial light. Revelation is not silent upon this point. It is the sin of man, rather than the Will of God, which has deprived the world of His more immediate Presence. When the Creator made man upon the earth, He did not leave him to lose himself in the varied wonders of creation, to search for evidences of creative Goodness, to look through nature up to nature's God. He conversed with man in a visible form, and was recognized as the Lord of creation. He gave, it may be, that evidence of His Being and Presence, which is now demanded by the atheist. But fallen man desires not, or is unable to walk with God. As between man and man, it is not till guilt has worn out shame, that the base and false can hide his confusion from another, or meet him with eye to eye; so it is with man before God. Hence the natural feeling, that man can not see God and live. The Scripture informs us that it was man who first fled from God, and not God who withdrew Himself from man. He who had sinned but once was covered with shame, and could no longer endure the Presence of the Most Holy. Even Moses is represented as unable to behold His Glory; and, it is remarkable, it was when the Israelites at Sinai were afraid to hear his voice, that God gave the promise to mankind, to visit them in the form of a Prophet, like unto Moses the meekest of men (Deut. xviii.).

That He does not discover Himself by constant supernatural revelations, but addresses us in His written word, communicated through chosen witnesses, and attested by such evidences as we are accustomed to trust in the common interests of life, should be regarded as an instance of condescension to our infirmities. Such a revelation is, besides, what is eminently adapted to a state of trial. It supplies all the motives of which we are capable as moral agents, but does not force conviction on the willful. It speaks

plainly to the ears that hear, but is silent to those who desire it to be so. It reveals God to the soul which seeks Him, but hides Him from those who prefer darkness. It is like the pillar of the cloud and fire in the passage of the Red Sea.

6. A few words on principles of interpretation. Human language must be infinitely inadequate to express Divine Truth, as the mind is incompetent to understand it. But man can have some knowledge, however distant, and his language can extend to its limits.

In endeavoring to draw positive knowledge from revelation, it must be assumed that since God has condescended to address us in the language of men, He has employed that language in its common acceptation, and as it would be generally understood. He is the Father of all men; but if His word show favor to any, it is to the poor and unlearned. The language of revelation may therefore be expected to be generally intelligible to the attentive reader. It is contrary to its whole scope and purpose to explain it on some abstruse system of mythical interpretation, which can be understood by very few, often by none. We have no right to bend it to preconceived notions, nor to tie it down to the Procrustean bed of any human scheme. It is due to its Author, that we come to it as ignorant, and listen reverently to its teaching. It can contain nothing inconsistent with natural truth, nothing at variance with our moral and intellectual nature, however it may go beyond them.

There is but one sense in which systems of philosophy can aid us in the interpretation of Scripture. Words and notions have been current in all ages, which originated in the schools. The school-learning may therefore explain the usage of words and notions, in former ages of the world, and so illustrate the language of revelation. That Scriptural words or notions are sometimes taken from profane sources, can, in no case, prove a doctrine to be a mere human speculation.[1]

[1] As the Bampton Lectures of Dr. Hampden often appear to argue. Not but that doctrinal speculation has been one impediment to moral improvement, thus thwarting the very purpose of revelation.

CHAPTER II.

DOGMATIC THEISM OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

1. The Inspired Writings.—2. Self-existence.—3. God is a Spirit.—4. The Divine Holiness.—5. The Love of God.—6. The Trinity in Unity.—7. The Divine Unity.—8. The Holy Trinity.—9. Mystery of the Infinite.—10. Arians, Sabellians, and Orthodox.—11. Doctrinal Speculation.—12. Importance of the Doctrine.

1. WE have applied the term Christian Theism to the doctrine of One God, Infinitely powerful, wise, and good, as established by revealed, as well as natural religion. The Christian can not but look to the Sacred Scriptures for his highest knowledge of the Creator. The inspired writings, by their dogmatic statements, and still more by their discoveries of the Divine Character and Conduct, both confirm and extend the conclusions of natural theism. They also give a positive signification to some of its conceptions, which could otherwise be regarded as but approximate or metaphorical. They have had, besides, so great an influence upon the history of the world and the progress of thought—to say nothing of the unseen influence of their truths in restraining the natural degeneracy, and checking the degradation of the race—that natural theology has been largely indebted to them for its ability to establish a doctrine of the Supreme Being. There is a revelation of God in man and nature, yet it has not been interpreted without supernatural aid.

2. Holy Scripture sanctions and establishes the human notion of the Necessity and Inherent Self-existence of the Supreme Being. It constantly represents Him as possessing an Existence wholly different from that of finite and dependent beings, and Superior to it. This truth is implied in the name JEHOVAH. It was declared with peculiar solemnity to Moses, when he was called to be the dispenser of a new revelation of the Divine Will to future ages. The Divine and Incommunicable Name—I AM THAT I AM, was then pronounced by God Himself (Exod. iii. 14; vi. 3; xxxiv. 6).

The same truth is explicitly declared in the New Testament. The Son of God plainly enunciates—"The Father hath life in Himself" (St. John, v. 26)—words to which it is difficult to attach any definite meaning, unless we understand them to assert this inherent and underived Being.

That the Divine Nature is infinite and incomprehensible, is a well-known doctrine of Scripture. "His judgments are Unsearchable, and His Ways past finding out" (Rom. xi. 33; 1 Cor. ii. 11): His Essence is "Invisible" (Col. i. 15; 1 Tim. i. 17), but His Glory may be imaged as "the Light which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim. vi. 16); and He is known through His Works in Creation and Redemption (Rom. i. 20; St. John x. 14; xvii. 3.)

3. It is a common objection to theology, that it borrows from the nature of man the conceptions in which it clothes its doctrine of the Infinite Being. The answer of natural religion has been already given. It is confirmed by revelation. The first pages of the Bible discover, what is supported by its whole tenor, that, though man's knowledge of God is derived from that of his own mind, yet there is positive truth in it as far as it goes. "God created man in His own Image." So far, then, as man retains that Image, he has in himself a partial, though infinitely distant resemblance of his Creator. Though fallen from his first estate to one of disorder, he is still a living soul, still an intellectual and moral being. How far he is indebted to the Saviour of all men, for the preservation even of any original powers and gifts of creation, it is not necessary to know exactly. The old creation is disordered, but it is certain that there is no new creation by means of sin. In his mental faculties, man may still discover the traces of that image in which he was created, and may thus gain, from his own nature, some distant knowledge of the Creator. His likeness to his Maker can not have consisted in his bodily frame; it must be sought in his mental constitution. The words of Scripture are otherwise without meaning. It may thus be known to be a real truth to man, that "God is a Spirit." The same doctrine is explicitly stated in many well-known passages.

The Attribute of Spirit—that of acting with purpose, is as-

signed to God in His works of grace as well as of creation. His Wisdom is displayed both in nature and in the eternal counsels of redemption (Acts, xv. 18; Eph. i. 3–11); and His purpose is fulfilled by the free powers of self-determining agents as perfectly as by the laws and forces of inert matter. They accomplish His Will even by resisting it. His Wisdom has so ordained the universe, that even the sins and inconsistencies of mankind, which are foreknown though not fore-appointed, can not fail to be directed to some good end. Finite agents may refuse the gifts of benevolence in themselves, but will effect some purpose of Infinite Wisdom in the universe (Acts, ii. 23, etc.). The manifestation of the Divine Wisdom in revelation will be farther considered in following chapters.

4. On the Moral Attributes—the Holiness and Love of the Creator—revelation supports and confirms the hesitating inferences of natural religion. It every where represents the Moral Law as the Will of God, and as resting in His Eternal Nature. As man was made in the Divine image, so the creation was "very good." Every thing was adapted to wise ends; all combined in suitableness and perfect order. It is the purpose of Scripture, from the beginning to the end of it, to bring man to conformity with the Divine Will. This is the requisition of the old Law—"Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am Holy" (Lev. xix. 2). It is no less the injunction of the New Testament—"Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (St. Matt. v. 48).

Revelation responds to Conscience, by discovering the Author and the Vindicator of the moral law. As Conscience looks to God for the foundation of the law, and regards it, not as superior to Him and constraining Him, but rather as deriving its origin and force from His Eternal Holiness, so the Bible confirms the decisions of reason and conscience, assuring us that "There is none good but One, that is, God" (St. Matt. xix. 17); that "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John, i. 5), that His Word is Truth, and all sin a lie, and of the father of lies (St. John, xvii. 17; viii. 44). It declares the sense of right to be indeed as deep as it is felt to be, and the voice of conscience to issue forth

from the deep fountain of the soul's being. It speaks of the wicked as "like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Is. lvii. 20); and abounds in passages which discover the righteous to be like the ocean in the calm majesty of the fresh creation, when "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." It is its constant doctrine, that the difference between the righteous and the wicked has all the deep reality of the difference between life and death, between communion with God, and separation from Him, in the depths of the soul's being.

That the Scriptures declare the Most High to be the Vindicator of the law of holiness—a Judge who is able to reward and punish—is what needs no particular reference. Their unchanging, unceasing message from Genesis to Revelation is, blessing to the soul that doeth well, woe to the soul that doeth evil; that God "hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts, xvii. 31); that He will "render to every man, according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12, etc.). They set before us, as the great end of life, that we learn to be followers of Him, who is "The Image of the Invisible God;" who came into the world and suffered "that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). *To be brought to God, then, is to be brought to holiness;* the one notion is included in the other, since God is Eternal Holiness (Eph. v. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 18, etc.). And to be one with God, is to be conformed to that Eternal Law of Order, which has its residence in the Divine Nature. We are required "to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24; ii. 10). It was the *purpose* of Christ, in His Life and Death, to "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit. ii. 14). Through the inspiring power of faith in Him, we may escape the dominion and the doom of the father of lies, we may have our "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. vi. 22).

The Sufferings and Death of Christ have commonly been regarded by Christians as the most striking proof of the Divine Justice or Holiness. And with reason. Whatever mysteries may envelop the subject, it is manifestly the doctrine of Scripture, that the cure of moral evil, and the deliverance of man from its ruin, re-

quired an interposition of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, more marvelous to men and angels than all the wonders of creation.

5. But it is chiefly on the Love of God that the study of nature has never been able to satisfy the doubtful mind, nor to quiet the troubled and sorrowing soul. Experience shows with what difficulty the mind is sometimes convinced, that, notwithstanding all the wrongs and ills of life, God is still Infinitely Good. When or where did man, from the study of himself or nature, assure himself of the truth that the Creator is Infinite Love, till it was enunciated by the Living Word—till He, by whom the worlds were made, came forth from the Bosom of the Father, and, in the fields and streets of Palestine, proclaimed the sublime truth of Eternal Love from God to man? Before His advent, Heaven had condescended to give, through inspiration, a solemn assurance of that Divine Goodness which skepticism had questioned, and the pious had acknowledged with timidity. God's ways were said to be unequal. Under the burden of evil, men had cried out, "How shall we live?" The answers to these doubts are among the most remarkable passages of the Old Testament. "Are not my ways equal, are not your ways unequal?" Is there not something more than human in that Awful Oath, which is delivered to us as the Oath of the Almighty—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. xviii. and xxxiii.)? But the New Testament is the complete vindication of the Divine Goodness. Sorrow is consoled, impatience is rebuked, by the Sufferings of the Son of God. That men are perfected by suffering, and can glory even in tribulations, are common truths of Christianity.

The New Testament is no less distinct, in its agreement with the sure inferences of natural religion, on the Divine Equity. Nothing can be more positive than its assertions, that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts, x. 34; Rom. ii. 11, etc.); that Jesus is "The Saviour of all men" (1 Tim. ii. 4; iv. 10, etc.), and therefore none can forfeit the highest gifts, but through their own fault; and that, as men have their various talents and degrees, so each

will be responsible in his measure, and for no more than he was able to perform (St. Matt. xxv. 14–30; Rom. ii. 12; and the whole Bible).

Love is regarded by Scripture as an Essential and Eternal Affection of the Divine nature. Man is but a creature of yesterday, yet he is loved with an Eternal Love, and predestined to Eternal Glory. This Love of God to man is both set forth as the example of the love which man is bound to return, and is itself a manifestation of a Higher and Internal Affection of the Divine Nature. The Son of God is "the Beloved of the Father." "The Father loveth the Son" in Eternal Glory, according to the affecting language of Jesus Himself, when He prays that His Glory, and the Love wherewith the Father had loved Him before the foundation of the world, may be imparted to those whom He has loved, while present with them, and who are to wage the war against iniquity, when He shall be with them, in the Spirit, though unseen (St. John, xvii. 5, 22–26).

Attention to this chapter of St. John must make it evident, that, if the language of man be of any value in conveying the Truth of God to man—unless we are to take up the weak notion that God can not communicate with his creatures through that faculty of language which He has given them—it is evident that Scripture speaks not only of the manifestations of Goodness in creation, but of that Divine Glory which is from everlasting to everlasting, when it announces that GOD IS LOVE.

6. Revelation is in perfect accordance with reason on the Unity of the Deity. That there is One Great First Cause of all things, is the certain conclusion of natural theology. Revealed religion uniformly testifies to the truth that "Jehovah is God, there is none else beside Him." This great doctrine of all religion is not inconsistent with the revealed doctrine of the Three Persons in the One God. The difficulties and disputes which have arisen on this article of the Christian Faith, make it necessary to offer some observations, with a view to show that the simple doctrine of Scripture is consistent with the Divine Unity, and that, though necessarily incomprehensible — since the mystery of the Divine Nature is unsearchable—yet it is, in no respect, inconsistent with

reason, but rather consistent with it, as far as reason can go; and this too, when we take account of the latest results of thought.

7. The doctrine of the Divine Unity is closely connected with that of the Divine Infinity. Reason requires, for the foundation of its principles, an Absolute First Cause, of infinite attributes. It can not admit two independent causes of the universe. It can not conceive the possibility of two Infinite Beings. The God of Heaven reveals Himself to be that Absolute Being, without beginning, without end, without limit or restriction, of whom man is ever in search, when guided by the light of nature and the instincts of the soul.

8. But there is another principle of reason, which may lead it to anticipate some internal distinctions or relations—human words can be but figurative—in the Nature of the First Cause of all. It is briefly expressed in the Equation of Hegel—pure being and non-being are identical.[1] This equation undoubtedly *contains* an important truth. It signifies that reason can form no conception of pure and simple being, independent of all notion of relations; and that, whenever it attempts to form such a conception, it passes unavoidably to that of nonentity. We can form no conception of a simple, indivisible, isolated soul, existing without relation to other souls, or to a world around it; nor of a simple and self-sufficient monad or force, causing the existence of mind or matter, without connection with other forces. It is only by intercourse with the world that the mind comes into possession of its faculties. All immediate knowledge is of relations: in all experience, the subjective and the objective are combined in one thought, are discovered together, and can not be separated; and if we attempt to strip any existing thing of those properties and qualities, which depend entirely on its relations to other things, nothing is left to be an object of thought, and the existence, as far as man is concerned, is resolved into nothing.

It is true then, that, *as far as reason can extend*, pure existence, without relation, is undistinguishable from non-existence. The equation of Hegel must be confined within the limits of knowledge; to carry it beyond them—to give it a transcendental mean-

[1] Seyn = nichts.

ing, is to make the human faculties the measure of universal being.

It seems, then, whatever be the Deep Nature of the Eternal, that it is more consistent with reason than the contrary to anticipate that there must be certain internal relations or distinctions in the Divine Nature, though we may expect them to be wholly unknown. We can more easily approximate to the notion of an Infinite Being, by admitting unknown relations in His eternal Nature, than we can form a notion of pure existence without relations. The one notion is to man nonentity: the other is something unknown in its inward nature. Thus revelation is consistent with the highest results of reason, when it affirms there are certain distinctions in the Divine Nature, which it indicates by the human words—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It need hardly be said that these words, and the word Person, and all other words, can be but partially applicable, and are infinitely inadequate to express the whole truth of the Divine Nature.

9. The Persons of the Godhead, though Three, are yet One, because there can be but One Infinite Being. There is nothing irrational in the doctrine. The common difficulty arises from the extension of reason beyond its province, and from the application to the Infinite of those principles of judgment, which we find to be true of the finite. Things finite are limited in time and space; finite minds in the extent and sphere of their powers, and consequently also in time and space. These limitations, then, distinguish one from another, as individuals of a plurality. The heathen, therefore, whose gods were beings of limited power and prescribed authority, consistently believed in a plurality of gods—a god of heaven, a god of hell, a god of the sea, a god of war. But once admit that God is Infinite, and our principles of reason, which are competent to judge of the finite, and to carry us from the finite to the Infinite, become incompetent to understand the Internal Nature of the Deity. They can assure us that two finites are distinct, but can not pronounce it irrational to say that two Infinites are essentially One. It is well known to the mathematician that the common rules of numbers are inapplicable to Infinites: it is no less conceivable, that there may be internal relations in the

Unknown Essence of the Deity, which may be partially and distantly represented by the human distinction of personality, though quite incomprehensible to us, yet these distinctions be compatible with the Divine Unity.

Once acknowledge the sublime and simple Truth, that God is a Being of Eternal and Infinite Essence, "Which was, and is, and is to come;" confess likewise the Necessary Attributes of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; and it follows that, whatever be the internal relations of the Divine Essence, the Persons of the Godhead, each possessing the same Infinite Attributes, can not be essentially distinct from one another. All we can pretend to say is this, that the Divine Persons are not Three, in the same sense in which they are One.

10. Disputes upon this, as on most other doctrines, have generally arisen either from ambiguities of language, or from dogmatism on things unknown. According to Dr. Hampden,[1] they have, in the present case, originated in vain attempts to define, in what particular sense the Divine Persons are One, and in what sense they are Three. The Arian, it appears, asserted a unity of thought, will, and action in the Three Persons, and made them of One Divine Nature, in the same sense in which all men are of one human nature. The Sabellian destroyed the distinction of number in the Persons of the Trinity, and left only a distinction of names; making the Three Persons to be One and the Same, under a different form or manifestation. The Arian, in short, asserts a logical, the Sabellian a physical unity. What, then, is the doctrine of the Orthodox? In connection with the others, we are informed that they maintain a unity both logical and physical. The reader may perhaps be led to conclude, since the argument of the Lectures is directed against dogmatism, that, in comparison of Arians and Sabellians, the Orthodox are doubly in error, because they dogmatically assert as much as both of them put together.

With a view to obviate difficulties, and to reconcile all parties, a new exposition is proposed. The Divine Unity "we understand numerically. But is this a just notion?" On the contrary, it is stated, in answer to this question, that the declaration of Moses—

[1] Bampton Lectures, iii.

"The Lord our God is one Lord"—was a declaration that Jehovah is not that host of heaven, the objects of heathen worship, but the God in heaven, in earth, in sea; not the Teraphim of domestic worship, but the Universal Governor; that it is not meant to convey a speculative notion of the Oneness of the Deity, but *practically*, no other than the command—"Thou shalt have none other gods but me."

11. The evils of speculation and dogmatism on things unknown are as obvious to-day as in the whole history of the Church. There can be little doubt that Arians, Sabellians, and Orthodox have often carried their speculations beyond all reason. But although it must be admitted that the relations and distinctions of numbers can not be applied, by human reason, to the Infinite, yet the statements of Scripture must be received in their full and simple signification. If words can be made the vehicle of truth from God to man, it is a real objective truth that God is One. To oppugn the speculations of others, and then question whether the Divine Unity should be understood numerically, must be to speculate as deeply as any of them. The numerous Scriptures which assert the Unity of the Deity, would generally be understood by the unlearned to signify a numerical unity. Indeed, any one but a metaphysician would be much puzzled to know in what way unity can be other than numerical. The word One conveys a definite sense to the many, who have never learned to draw distinctions between a logical and a physical unity, nor to understand the meaning of a unity which is not numerical; and Holy Scripture addresses itself to such as these, when it declares — There is but One God. They will understand the words to mean One Existing Being, and will think it speculative to give them any other signification.

12. These observations can not be thought unimportant to the subject of the present treatise. To unsettle the doctrine of the Divine Unity, must necessarily introduce confusion into the relations between natural and revealed religion. Natural religion establishes the truth of One Infinite Being, and requires that polytheism, in every sense, be excluded from the conception. Unless the Divine Persons be One Being in the Infinite Unity, they are like

the gods of the heathen, of limited existence and power. The Scripture doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, apart from human speculations, is not inconsistent with that of the Divine Unity. It leaves the great truth of monotheism in its simple signification.

The doctrine is above reason, not contrary to it. It is out of the sphere of human speculation. Of finite beings, it would be contradictory to say that three are one. Of Infinite Beings, no such contradiction can be affirmed. In what sense the Divine Persons are Three, in what sense they are One, are mysteries of the Infinite beyond our knowledge. The Internal Nature of the Deity, the relations of the Divine Persons, can not but be incomprehensible. But though unknown in their Eternity, the Persons of the Godhead become known in their relations to mankind; and their co-eternal Deity is the foundation of revealed religion. The Son of the Father is the "God and Saviour" of mankind; the Holy Spirit is "the Lord God, who dwells among them."

CHAPTER III.

ON MIRACLES, AND THEIR RELATIONS TO THE DIVINE WISDOM.

2. The Positive Philosophy.—3. Present Agency of God.—4. Eternal Purposes.—5. Natural Miracles.—6. Origin of Life.—7. Miracles.—8. All Laws dependent on God.—9. Anti-supernaturalism.—10. Arguments of Mr. Blanco White.—11. Revelation appeals to Reason.—12. Death before the Fall.—13. Providence and Prayer.—14. The abiding Presence of God.—15. Scriptural Doctrine.

1. The relation of the Laws of Nature to the Agency of the Creator is a subject which includes many difficult questions of natural theology; some of them quite beyond the sphere of knowledge, although sometimes discussed and decided in a confused and superficial manner. Such questions are, that already noticed between completed and continued creation; that of miracles, considered as interruptions of the laws of nature; the revealed doctrines of a particular Providence, and a God who answers prayer in a world governed by these natural laws; and generally all questions between Naturalism and Supernaturalism.

2. The religious skepticism which is founded on the laws of nature, has of late been pressed to the extreme, and exhibited in its full absurdity in "The Positive Philosophy." Its observations on the relations of law and mind are an example of that groundless assumption and assertion so common with it on these subjects. "The notion that phenomena proceed from a Supernatural Will," we read, "is the same thing as calling them variable."[1] That is, because the will of man seldom attains to a perfectly calm, consistent, invariable course of action; or, perhaps, because its agency is necessarily discontinuous, being interrupted by sleep, and passing from one action to another without obvious connection, we are therefore to regard this human inconsistency and discontinuity as an essential property of mind. We are to assume that no intelligent agency can be free from it; or that a being who acts with intelligent design is to be classed, not with mind, but with matter, unless his action be wavering and inconstant like that of man. It might have been seen, on a moment's thought, that the more a man's spiritual nature is cultivated, the less variable, the more consistent in conduct and principle he becomes. It would be strange to conclude him to be less a living and intelligent being than he was before, because a long life of virtuous endeavor has been continually raising him above that variableness which is so common to the unformed mind, and bringing him constantly nearer to the Image of that Perfect Mind, which changes not.

The opening chapter of the book quietly assumes it to be "the law of human progress," that "each branch of our knowledge passes successively through three different theoretical conditions; the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or abstract, and the scientific or positive." This "progress" of the general mind of man is illustrated, we read, by that of the individual mind. "Each of us is aware, if he looks back on his own history, that he was a theologian in his childhood, a metaphysician in his youth, and a natural philosopher in his manhood. All men who are up to their age can verify this for themselves."

That many men are able to verify this for themselves will not be questioned. It may be more than questioned, whether this is

[1] Vol. i. p. 223.

any evidence that they are "up to their age." There are also many, and they have not been the least eminent examples of human advancement, either in intelligence or in goodness, who retain the theological form of knowledge, along with the abstract and the scientific, to the end of their days; and are accustomed to regard this course, from the theologian of childhood to the atheist of old age, as one of any thing rather than progress. Holy Scripture has words on babes and children, which support them in their perverse opinion. We have seen that natural religion agrees with Scripture, and possibly the advocates of this "philosophy" may confirm them in their prejudice.

For certainly it deserves notice, that a celebrated book, which identifies the theological with the fictitious, and appeals to experience for support, holds it for a fundamental principle, that to be variable is the highest characteristic of will. It is quite true that they who passed through the theological form of knowledge in their childhood, and have come to regard it, in their old age, as fictitious, will generally find that the will has not grown more settled and consistent as life advanced. It is no new thing, when this is the case, for men to find in their age that they have no belief in God, and have grown into a conviction, which few, however, venture to express with so much assurance, that the theological is the same as the fictitious.

The same opposition between will and law occurs in connection with a passage already quoted. "If the consideration of man is to prevail over that of the universe, all phenomena are inevitably attributed to *will*—first natural, and then outside of nature; and this constitutes the theological system. On the contrary, the direct study of the universe suggests and develops the great idea of the *laws* of nature."[1] Little need be added to what has been said on this topic. The book anticipates the time when philosophy shall be perfect, and the two methods—the theological and the positive, shall be reconciled. In fact, they have always been reconciled in the true theological method, which finds no opposition between will and law. On the contrary, law is the rule of an immutable Will. It is mere assumption, without even a plausible ground

[1] Vol. i. p. 356.

to represent them as opposite and incompatible notions. It can need no demonstration, that the Infinite may conduct the phenomena of nature by unfailing powers and invariable laws.

3. But the ordinary questions on the relations of law to mind are more difficult, and some of the skeptical inferences from them less obviously absurd. A few observations on these questions, and especially on the relations between the mind of man and a revelation by miracles, will not be out of place.

The legitimate conclusions of reason on the present agency of the Creator in nature have been already indicated. Natural religion may regard the creation, either as finished in the first Fiat of creative Power, and thenceforward governed by a plastic nature within itself, or as in perpetual dependence on the Almighty. On either supposition, it is essential to any conception of the Infinite, that the first plan of the Creator, the first word of Creation, contained within it, virtually or actually,[1] all the powers of future being. But few minds can be satisfied with the notion of an existence wholly independent of the Self-existing Being. It is more congenial to the reason to regard the agency of the Creator as essential to the preservation, as well as to the first creation of all things. Both in the mind and in nature itself there are indications that no development of being has been effected without the Present God. The mind can not but regard the Infinite Being as superior to all conditions of time, and as present in all time. And those admirable arrangements and adjustments of the universe, which have resulted from material properties and forces that have been in action for ages of ages, yet are as exact and perfect in the present constitution of things as if they were directed by the immediate agency of the Almighty—these manifestations of present Wisdom in the natural processes of ages past, look like an approximation of material nature to the truth, that Eternity is one present to the Supreme Being.

But Holy Scripture recognizes the Divine Presence in every phenomenon. It discovers not only that all things were made by God, but that "in Him we live and move and have our being." He is the ever-present Spirit, who feeds the ravens, and so clothes the

[1] If the distinction be applicable to the Divine Agency at all.

lilies of the field, that "even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

4. In all the spaces and durations of creation the Divine plan may be known to be One, and His purpose immutable. He is too Great to have to change His intentions, or mend His first work, or interfere for the conservation of His universe, by occasional expedients not included in its eternal plan. Changes and diversities are apparent upon the surface of the world; disorder may seem in particular time and place to be predominant; war may be waged between good and evil; but God has "declared the end from the beginning," and all things will work for the accomplishment of His Purpose.

No difficulty need arise upon this truth from such Scriptural expressions as "it repented God." They are sometimes said to be metaphorical, and to have no literal application. Perhaps it would be more correct to consider them as relational. The Divine conduct can be seen by man only from his human point of view. As the works of God are subject to conditions of time and change, so His affections to His creatures can only be viewed under the same conditions. The word *repent* can not, in this application, include the human meaning of a wish that something had been left undone. It implies that the conduct of the creature has changed his relations to the Creator.

Revelation discovers that there is an eternal unity of plan in the Moral Dealings of God with His creatures, no less than in the material world. The natural laws of creation are known to have continued the same in all ages of the globe. In revelation we read of the Eternal Purpose of God to redeem His elect to the inheritance of a kingdom prepared before the foundation of the world, and of the eternal purpose "to gather together in one all things in Christ, which are in heaven and which are in earth." (Eph. i. 10; iii. 9–11.) Thus the view of the Divine conduct in Grace, which was long since given by revelation, agrees with that view of the Divine conduct in nature which has been but recently developed. The Scriptural doctrine of the Divine immutability of purpose is confirmed by the evident adaptation of the world, after so many epochs and changes, to the temporary existence of moral

agents; and the vast Plan of nature is subordinate to that greater plan, in which the righteous are eternally predestined to be called to the kingdom of Eternal Glory.

Thus the two majestic plans of nature and of grace unite in One, to declare the Immutability of the Lord of all; and, with the chorus of innumerable tongues of creatures in heaven and earth, roll down along countless ages the sublime song of the inspired psalmist of Israel—"Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy Years shall have no end." (Ps. cii.)

5. Thus, though all nature is full of God, we can be no less certain that the rich resources of Infinite Power are not all lavished upon the nature which we see. No figment of the imagination can be more empty, than the notion that the faculties and the experience of a creature of yesterday must either comprehend in fact, or, in the nature of things, be capable of comprehending, either the deep processes of the nature which is before our eyes, or the Infinite and Eternal Agency of the Omnipotent. We have no faculties for understanding His present and abiding agency in nature, since we can not ascertain the ultimate conditions of being which belong to the simplest existing thing. We do not need to go backward in time from present phenomena to first causes, before we arrive at the Incomprehensible. Every thing is incomprehensible in present time. The popular lines are true of the physical world, no less than of the ways of Providence:

> "God works in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform."

And it is evident that the nature which is known to us is but a part of the Divine ways. Even common observation discovers that events happen, from time to time, which can not be included in the known course of nature. We may again appeal to Geology and Astronomy. The former science furnishes evidences, in the changes both of the globe itself and of its successive living creatures, that the course of nature has not always been what it is

now. There was certainly a time when the world was without living inhabitants. And man's existence on the globe is comparatively recent. There appears also to be good evidence that the course of things has not been continuous, but has been repeatedly broken by catastrophes and revolutions, which are thought by some naturalists to have been so universal, as to have effected total changes in the species of animals which inhabited the earth. But however this be—for it is a secondary question—even if it could be shown that there is a progressive development of life in the world—if any one choose to call it a course of nature, which has evolved from the primeval fire the present world of life and love, of thought and beauty, he must, at all events, extend the signification of the word *nature* to something beyond those ordinary processes which we now regard as natural laws. No known process of nature has any such tendency.

Astronomy leads to a similar conclusion. The stability and order of its myriads of suns are proverbial. The stars and constellations are still the same, from night to night, as were observed by the Chaldean shepherds. Experience is here far more constant and trustworthy than any common experience of human life. Yet it is known to be not universal. Occasionally a new star has appeared in the heavens, sometimes one so bright as to be seen at mid-day, and after continuing visible for some time, has died away again and disappeared. A star of this kind was discovered but five years ago,[1] which was large enough to be for some months visible to the naked eye, when it gradually diminished in brightness till it was lost to the knowledge of man.

Thus Geology and Astronomy may be said, in some sense, to have their miracles, and afford instructive opportunities for the application of Hume's celebrated canon—"It is more improbable that miracles should be true, than that the testimony should be false." Nothing can be more unfounded and irrational than to assume that all things which are or can be, must fall within the measure of the finite understanding of man. As well might a blind man assume that, through the senses he possesses, he gains all possible knowledge of sensation. Nature runs out beyond our

[1] Written in 1853.

line in every direction. Experience and reason may discover, at the commencement and at the end of knowledge, the wisdom of the patriarch's confession—"Lo, these are parts of His Ways; but how little a portion is heard of Him? The thunder of His Power who can understand?"

6. That the world is subject to laws of wonderful constancy, which have continued the same from its earliest periods, is a certain truth of science. These laws prove, not that matter is independent of mind, but that the Mind which orders it is immutable. Still it is a question of science whether these laws, though continually the same, have not been subject to occasional temporary suspension. If it be true that there are distinct groups of fossil remains completely independent, it will follow that even the physical theory of the earth can not be included in one course of nature, continuous, in law and process, with the nature which is known. The further question will then arise—May not all the known laws of nature—the physical laws of the earth and stars—be subordinate to some higher and more comprehensive natural laws, related, it may be, to such sidereal phenomena as the proper motions of the sun and stars, and including in their causal connection, and not as mere occasional interferences or exceptions, the revolutions of geology, the appearances of temporary stars, and other phenomena, which, to our limited knowledge, appear as accidental or temporary?

The question of the origin of life in the world is of the same kind. "We are led by analogy," Sir John Herschel writes on this question, "to suppose that in the replacement of the extinct species of geology by others, the Creator operates through a series of intermediate causes, and that, in consequence, the origination of fresh species, could it ever come under our cognizance, would be found to be a natural, in contradistinction to a miraculous process, although we perceive no indication of any process actually in progress, which is likely to issue in such a result."[1] This, as we may be sure from its author, is written in the spirit of a philosopher, and may be contrasted with the weak assumptions which represent laws as incompatible with mind. Suppose, then, it were es-

[1] "The Ninth Bridgewater Treatise," Appendix i.

tablished that laws of nature extend to the origination of living species, as well as to their continuance; suppose it were ascertained that there is a continuity of law and force between the developments of matter and those of vegetable and animal life, and that matter and electricity, and the other dead forces of nature, possess the power of evolving life under the requisite conditions; what would be the theological effect of this conclusion? Nothing more than this—to give us an enlarged knowledge of the laws of nature, and to alter our definition of material substance. We should learn that there is a higher energy of Divine Power in the existence of matter than we have hitherto perceived, but the mystery of the Divine agency would remain as far beyond us as before.

If it could be ascertained for certain that there is a continuity of law and force from the existence of matter to that of living beings, whether vegetable, animal, or intelligent; yet it would not follow that the Divine Agency in creation is the same in all, nor would it be known how it passes from one to another. Man's knowledge of existence, whether of matter or of life, is altogether imperfect, partial, inadequate. He can never reach its fundamental principle. He can not tell that any *single thing exists* independently of Divine agency, nor how its existence is prolonged; and it must therefore be impossible to know whether there is any special agency, or what it is, which connects one form of existence with another. It is probable that those phenomena of nature which appear isolated and accidental, are connected by some law above our knowledge. But while we are in total ignorance of the manner in which Divine Power acts, in the ordinary and obvious laws of nature, it must be futile to inquire into its manner of action in laws which are beyond our sight.

7. Another important question connected with this subject is one more closely related to the evidences of revealed religion. It is that of Miracles in their relation both to the laws of nature and to the Agency of God. It is evident that those events which we regard as miraculous, because they are not included in the common course of nature which falls within our cognizance, may be parts of a higher nature, which may be directed according to still more comprehensive laws. These laws are necessarily unknown

to us, because we are acquainted with but a few isolated phenomena of their action.

This, no doubt, is an admissible supposition: and when nothing more is intended by those who deny the possibility of miracles, no reasonable objection can be made to their opinion. In fact, it may be a mere question of words, whether or no we are to include the Whole Agency of the Creator, unknown as well as known, under the term *Nature*. The only objection would be, that this is not the ordinary signification of the word. Thus there can be no objection to the statement of Spinoza, that "it is most irrational to imagine that God created nature so impotent, and gave it laws so barren, as to be obliged to interfere with its course, to make things turn out according to His Will."[1] This may be all very true, at least when we take account of a remark which precedes,[2] to the effect that by *nature* he means not only matter and its affections, but besides matter infinite other forms of being. But the case is very much altered, when he pretends to account for the long day of Joshua[3] by the ice which abounded in the atmosphere (referring to Joshua, x. 11), and to find the natural cause of the Egyptian boils in the ashes sprinkled toward heaven, and that of the recovery of sight to the blind (St. John, ix.) in the clay. This is bringing the infinite other forms of being within the ordinary and known laws of nature.

8. But even when it is admitted that the Divine agency is always ordered according to fixed laws, which may be called laws of nature, it is a great mistake to take for granted that these laws are either independent of the Deity, or unfit to authenticate a special revelation of His Will. On the contrary, we are bound by the arguments of theism to regard the Supreme Being as the Originator of all the laws of every course of nature, whether within our observation or above it. So that it is no less a miracle when the lower law of nature is modified by the higher law, at the exact time at which it pleases God to make a revelation of His Will, than if the nature which is known to us were modified by His immediate interference. Thus, to illustrate by the calcu-

[1] Tract. Theol.-Pol. cap. vi. § 12.
[2] Ib. § 10, marginal note.
[3] Ib. cap. ii. § 27.

lating engine of Mr. Babbage,[1] it is no less a proof of knowledge and of power superior to the engine itself, to predict that a law which has held good for a million and one instances will change at the million and second, than to be able to produce such a change by interfering with the movements of the machine.

Suppose it granted that the standing of the sun, in the time of Joshua, was a phenomenon of a law, superior to the ordinary laws of nature which are known to man, and including these laws as subordinate; still it is no less a proof of Divine Power, and no less an evidence of special revelation, to have ordained the laws of universal nature in such a way, that the exception to the common laws should take place at the time it did, than if the visible change were effected by immediate interposition. And, after all, it is impossible to ascribe the knowledge of Joshua that the sun and moon would obey so extraordinary a command, to any thing less than an immediate revelation from heaven.

9. These observations apply to many of the pretended explanations of Scripture miracles, with which recent anti-supernaturalists, following the example of Spinoza, have perplexed themselves and others. It is not difficult to see the weakness of philosophical anti-supernaturalism, or that pretended philosophy which considers all miracles incredible and impossible. If, on such a system, it is intended to deny that any thing can happen contrary to the laws of *universal nature*, the denial is a mere truism, and on the question of miracles is without meaning. Universal nature mounts ultimately to the Universal Agency of the Creator. But if it be maintained that all events which can possibly be discovered to man, must necessarily be included within the common laws of nature which are known to him; and if it be attempted, on this supposition, to explain the miracles of Scripture by known laws and causes, it is manifest that the scheme is founded on the absurd assumption, that man's faculties and means of knowledge are necessarily equal to the comprehension of all things which are or can be.

Hence we may understand the question of the fitness of miracles to authenticate a Divine revelation to the world. Precisely as the

[1] See "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise."

laws of nature discover to us the ordinary operation of the Almighty, so may occasional violations of the laws manifest the presence of One Superior to nature, and be the credentials of a special communication.

It is here of great consequence to have correct notions of the Power and Wisdom of God, on account of the close relation of the question to the fundamental principles of Christian Evidences. The point is one which has, of late years, often led to discussion, and has lain at the foundation of some remarkable phases of infidelity.

10. It was treated with much closeness of reasoning by the late Mr. Blanco White,[1] and, it can not be questioned, with perfect sincerity. But, to speak with respect, is there not a great mistake at the foundation of his arguments? He treats the question between supernaturalism and rationalism, as if it were one between sensation and reason; whereas all religious supernaturalism is founded both upon sensation and reason. He says:

"With a truly infantine ignorance of man's mental constitution, people continue to imagine that no belief can exceed in certainty that which would arise from hearing God Himself make a verbal statement of what He wished mankind to hold as unquestionably true. But there is a monstrous misconception at the bottom of this notion; for does it not suppose that God may make Himself an object of which our senses may judge? God, I doubt not, can do all things, except what is in contradiction with Himself; it is He that has made our senses in such a manner that they can receive only certain kinds of impressions—impressions essentially distinct from every thing mental or spiritual. The supposition, then, that He would resort to such a medium for a more immediate and more secure communication with man, implies a charge of ignorance of His Own works in the great Creator. 'God is a Spirit,' is the sublime fundamental principle of Christ's religion. Man too is in part a spirit. . . ." And so he goes on to argue that the communication between God and man would naturally be expected to be spiritual. But this could only be apprehended by the reason, which "is said to be too weak, too much exposed to error and de-

[1] In Mr. Martineau's "Rationale;" Appendix.

lusion." "How shall this difficulty be obviated? How shall God remove uncertainty from His most particular and important communications with man? Let God be seen and heard, answers the supernaturalist."

11. His objection to this answer proceeds on the assumption that the supernaturalist, by his appeals to miracle, puts himself under the guidance of sense alone. But this appeal to the senses does not exclude any possible application of reason, or any other possible means of knowledge. Undoubtedly God is a Spirit; and man is, in part, a spirit. But, then, man is not wholly a spirit, and he is the work of God, both in his mind and in his senses. Instead of inferring that the communication between God and man will be spiritual, or through the reason of man, we ought rather to expect that He will reveal Himself through all the inlets of knowledge which He has given him, and that His extraordinary revelations will be authenticated by evidences at least as full and complete as the ordinary manifestations of His Being and Power. This becomes the more certain, when we consider, what has been made sufficiently evident in the former part, that no single faculty of man, neither reason nor sense, considered by itself, can either be developed into action, or find a door of access from the internal thought to external being. It is not by reason or feeling alone that man becomes assured of the truth that God exists, but by the combined action of all his faculties, and in communication with the world without. A discovery of the Divine Existence to reason or feeling alone—and the two would be undistinguishable—would manifestly be "exposed to error and delusion." How, then, is this danger obviated in the ordinary revelation of God? Manifestly by the concurrent testimony of all the faculties of knowledge. God is a Spirit, but His agency is discoverable in the world of sensation, and reason is the discoverer of His presence even there. It may be expected that a special revelation will be authenticated in the same way. We need not infer, as Mr. White puts the case, "that when a sound like that of the human voice can not be traced to any man, it must, beyond all doubt, originate in God." Here, as before, reason must be the judge, and must decide upon the circumstances before it, with all its faculties of information.

This explanation may set at rest other notable difficulties of the same writer. One of them had so much weight with him that he says—"I have examined this objection to the common theological notions on revelation and miracles with the utmost impartiality and attention of which I am capable; I have done so for many years, under a desire of finding it fallacious; for the superstitious fears, inspired by my early education, were not easily subdued; but I never could discover even a plausible answer." His difficulty, however, appears to be no more than is easily obviated by what has gone before. According to "the immutable laws of the human understanding, the Eternal Source of those laws, if He intended to guide mankind by miracles (and verbal Revelation is of that class), not by reason, must have intended two things: first, that the great mass of mankind in a low state of mental development, should follow the most extravagant dreams of enthusiasm and imposture; secondly, that in proportion as the human mind increased in knowledge, so it would reject the miraculous Divine guidance."

With respect to the first of these statements, there can be no doubt that men in a low state of mental development are liable to be misled by the most extravagant impostures; but this can prove no more than that God does not change His laws, because men deprive themselves and their children of the faculties with which they were endowed. On the second, it is enough to observe, that the human mind, as it increased in knowledge, would not, on this account, reject miraculous Divine guidance, but would be better qualified to discriminate between true miracles and false pretensions.

Another difficulty of the same kind is founded on a passage[1] of the Law of Moses (Deut. xiii. 1–5), which enjoins the Israelites to put to death a prophet who should work signs or wonders to lead them after other gods. This passage is thought to leave the Jews perfectly excusable in their rejection of the Messiah: "not even the clearest miracles could relieve them from a most distressing perplexity. The Jew was bound to continue what he was in regard to religion, even if heaven and earth obeyed the voice of a reforming prophet: he would not be moved at such signs, for he had the highest authority to believe, that *the Lord his God was proving Him.*

[1] Noticed also by Spinoza. Tract. Theol.-Pol. cap. vi.

The Mission of the Messiah was, without doubt, a severe probation to the Jews; and it can hardly fall within human judgment to decide what form of probation is consistent with the Divine Equity. Moral probation, then, does not depend on the senses alone, since its purpose is not to prove the strength of an unfounded, unreasonable obstinacy. It must call into action the intellectual and moral nature. It was for the Jews to judge, by all the means in their power, not between the Lord and other gods, as in the case instanced by Moses, but whether Jesus were not Himself the Lord. They were bound to employ their reason upon all the evidences they possessed, both in His miracles and in their Scriptures, to ascertain whether or no Jesus of Nazareth were He, "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write."

12. Some of the inconsistencies which have been supposed to divide Science from Revelation depend on similar difficulties in the question of the Divine agency by general laws. One of these arises from the geological fact, that death was in the world long before the existence of man. How is this to be reconciled with the doctrine of Scripture, that sin brought death into the world? But it must not be hastily assumed that that which is first in time is therefore first in the Divine Purpose. We have no warrant for supposing that the universe of mind and matter is bound in one unbroken chain of physical causes, and can not know what is the connection between sin and death. But it would appear improbable that the plan of Infinite Wisdom in the creation would need to be changed, that its purpose might not be thwarted by the wayward will of man. Even reason would seem almost to expect that the world would be adapted to the permanent condition of the human race, and not to a state of innocence, which it was foreknown would not continue.

13. A more important question is that of a Special Providence, which includes that of Prayer. How are these Christian doctrines compatible with the uniformity of the laws of nature? How can God care for us individually, when all things are bound in unerring laws? How can He hear and answer occasional prayers, unless His agency be occasional.

The difficulty of these questions generally arises from defective

conceptions of Infinite Wisdom. None but atheists can consistently join in that superficial ridicule of public prayer and thanksgiving, which are so common. Between the inflexible laws of nature, and a Providence who answers prayer, *there is no inconsistency of opposite doctrines;* but only an incompetency of the human understanding, to know how they coexist. There is no inconsistency, unless it be assumed that the answer to prayer can not be given, but through change of the Divine plans. But God is superior to nature, eternally and infinitely superior. He is the Creator of nature, and has made it perfectly to fulfill its ends. He has prepared the world for the habitation of man, through innumerable causes, which have co-operated during long ages. Natural laws and causes have been perfectly adapted and adjusted, during the immense ages of the past, yet combine as skillfully to provide for the present wants of the world's inhabitants as if they took counsel together for this immediate purpose. So that a particular providence is, after all, nothing different, except in extent, from a general providence. The general providence for the wants of mankind is a subordinate manifestation of the universal laws of nature, which have prevailed during ages past. The particular is subordinate, in the same way, to the general providence. As the universal laws of all time have evolved the one, so its general laws in the present time may evolve the other. The natural processes of geology have established the course of the world; this may extend itself, in like manner, to particular instances.

The Divine agency need not be occasional, to answer occasional prayers, because Infinite Wisdom takes account of all occasional events of finite wills, in the foundation of its eternal plans. Hence the Almighty does not contravene the laws of nature; He can answer prayer consistently with them, and by means of them. All the changes of endless time were spread before Him in the first constitution of things. That Vast Plan took account of all the revolutions of the material world, and all the movements of the capricious wills of men, and contained provision for every particular emergency. It included an answer to every true prayer.

14. This view is not inconsistent with the Abiding Presence of the Creator. It has reference only to the Divine purpose, not to

the manner of its execution in nature; and the questions are wholly distinct. The laws of nature may either be conceived to be connections of powers which exist independently, through the first Fiat of creation; or the order of the immediate Divine agency. We have found reason to hold that there is a present agency of the Creator in all finite existence; and therefore, though we have spoken of the First Creative Purpose, as if it were something past, this is only from the imperfection of human language and modes of thought. The First Purpose of the Infinite is, in fact, His Eternal Purpose. We have seen that there is nothing unreasonable in considering it to extend to particular determinations, and to answer prayers. Of the manner of its execution we know nothing. We can not trace the connection between our own minds and the outward world, much less approach the unsearchable problem—How the Ideas of the Divine Mind pass forth to realize themselves in creation. To understand the relation between laws of nature and a particular providence, we must have comprehended that between the time of man and the Eternity of God—one of the things which pass knowledge.

15. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, confirm that view of the Divine Wisdom, according to which its particular determinations are included in its eternal purpose. Thus, in the New Testament, as in the whole Bible, admission to the kingdom of heaven is conditional on prayer. And yet it is stated in many passages that the members of that kingdom are chosen before the foundation of the world, and predestinated according to the eternal purpose of God. These doctrines of prayer and predestination are still often regarded as inconsistent, and by many Christians are not reconciled but by explaining away either the moral agency of man or the Sovereignty of the Creator. At first sight, they will generally appear to be incompatible; but cease to be so to those who have laid aside false notions of Infinite Wisdom. It deserves consideration, whether this be not an internal testimony to the inspiration of the Sacred Writers.

CHAPTER IV.

MODERN INFIDELITY AND ITS CLAIM TO SIT IN JUDGMENT UPON GOD.

1. Modern Deism.—2. Secularism.—3. Competency of the Moral Judgment.—4. Mr. Newman on the Moral Judgment.—5. Limits of the Moral Judgment.—6. Objections to the Wisdom of Revelation.—7. And to the Divine Holiness in Scripture.—8. Objections to the Revelation of Divine Love.—9. Speculative and practical Atheism.

1. It has been already observed that mankind are much indebted to the Sacred Scriptures for their knowledge of the Moral Attributes of the Creator. This is admitted to be true, even by writers who assume to sit in judgment upon the contents of Revelation, and to reject whatever they may think inconsistent with their rational conceptions of the Divine Attributes.[1] They derive their highest knowledge of the Divine Character from the Inspired Writers; yet profess to be wiser than their teachers on the very truths which they would never have known without them. They have learned from the Scriptures that God is Love, yet find the statements of the same Scriptures concerning the Love of God to be inconsistent with right notions of the Supreme Being. They can all see this religion to be erroneous on the very doctrines of which it alone has been the outward teacher; though their judgment rests upon an inward conception of the Infinite Being, which, without this teacher, they would never have attained. Thus, with loud anticipations of success, the deist joins hands with the atheist in the attempt to set up a counter-theory.

2. It is the aim of modern atheism to dissever religion from common life, and to represent it as concerned about the happiness of an uncertain life to come, to the neglect of all the duties and interests of the life present and known. These, it seems, are henceforth to fall under the name of *Secularism*. This convenient word is

[1] Thus Mr. Hennell has—"Jesus Christ has added to philosophy the principle of regarding the Supreme Mind as an object of the affections." (Christian Theism, ed. 2, p. 45.) And Mr. Parker—"The greatest minds, the richest hearts have set no loftier aim, no truer method than Jesus', of perfect Love to God and man." (Discourse, p. 222.)

to stand for the practical and useful departments of positive philosophy, and to afford a unity of name and purpose to all who may wish to serve the world by useful pursuits, without regard to religion.

Most Christians will consider it a truism, that religion aims to secure the happiness of a life beyond death, not through neglect of the best duties and interests of the present, but by means of them. Religion includes secularism: secularism, so-called, is only the negation of the cherished hopes, the high aims, the powerful motives, which religion furnishes as means of secular improvement. The religion of Christ does not countenance the separation of present duties from eternal hopes. It is misunderstood by infidels, and traduced by its professors, when it is represented as unfavorable to any useful pursuit, or opposed to any development of the powers and resources of humanity. It is not realized if it fail to enforce the common duties of public and private life, or to advance whatever tends to the material strength, the intellectual greatness, the moral improvement, the general happiness of mankind. Christianity, with its doctrine of God within us, fosters every good disposition and encourages every useful pursuit, by consecrating them, and regarding them as duties, not only to men but to the Lord.

All religion is founded on the assumption that life is a state of trial preparatory to a future life. This truth implies that the preparation for eternity consists not in neglecting the duties of time, but in performing them well. Moreover, the advancement of science and civilization increases the opportunities and talents of men as accountable beings, and makes them capable of a higher religious development. True religion will therefore aim at secular improvement, that mankind may be in a higher position as moral agents. With this view, it will seek to draw out the intellectual and moral powers of the race, to establish their freedom, to meliorate their outward circumstances. Such will be its aim, and such also is its natural tendency. In proportion as it has flourished, the secular condition of the race has been improved. It is irreligion which has lowered it in all ages from the Fall of man. The pretensions of atheistic secularism would be tested if it were to take in hand a tribe of savages and compete with Christian Mis-

sions in the work of civilization. But atheism will direct its philanthropic efforts to the heathen at its own doors. It wisely avoids the savage tribes, for it has been among them in ages past, and has finished its work. Secularism has made them what they are. There is still a sphere open to it at home, for our heathen are not yet degenerated to barbarism. They must receive more implicitly, and realize for a few generations, the pregnant maxim, that they should live for the present, because they will die like brutes; before they will give the world another instance of the tribe degraded to the brutes. Unhappily, when the mischief has been done, the darkened understanding can no longer detect the imposture.

3. In this visionary scheme, atheism joins hands with deism—the system or systems, which acknowledge the Supreme Being, and sometimes also the religious nature and hopes of man, but do not see that Revelation has been necessary, to rescue the human race from these miserable consequences of speculative and practical atheism. Christianity has raised the deist above the condition of the savage, yet he thinks he can supercede it with something better.

In considering some recent criticisms on revealed religion, which are in fact objections to the scripture revelations of the Divine Wisdom and Goodness, we shall frequently meet with the question, how far the faculties of man are competent to pronounce judgment on the Moral Perfections of the Creator.

There can be no question that man is dependent upon his faculties for whatever knowledge he can possess, natural or revealed. It is only through the mental powers that he is able to understand the language of nature, or to find a meaning in revelation. Reason must also be called in to establish the evidences of revelation; and, consequently, the known authority of revealed religion can not exceed that of the natural powers, and must be commensurate with the veracity of reason Not that religion can be inferred to be a delusion, because it may not have been established by examination and reflection. If the Bible be inspired, it is probable that it will carry its own evidences to the mind of the sincere, though unlearned, inquirer. But this spiritual perception is beyond the province of reflective knowledge and inquiry.

4. It must be admitted that "man is finite, tied down within his sphere, limited by his limited faculties," and consequently that "no higher arbiter of truth is accessible to man than the mind of man."[1] But this fundamental truth, that the faculties of the mind are our only means or inlets of knowledge, does not imply that they must be capable of universal knowledge. Indeed, it is the very opposite of such a notion. Yet this obvious truth is sometimes overlooked; as when it is argued, that because the advocates of Christianity often appeal to conscience to judge of the internal evidences of revelation, they are therefore precluded from removing any of its doctrines out of the sphere of the moral judgment. Thus, in the writer just quoted—"It is highly popular to set forth the excellence of *a great deal* in the Bible to which *our consciences bear witness*, and then deduce that all persons are wicked who deny the authority and infallibility of the book."[2] Mr. Newman maintains that if Conscience be a competent judge of a great deal, it is competent to judge of the whole. As well might it be argued that we ought to lay aside the use of reason, because there are questions which transcend reason. The gift of a revelation implies that man is unable, by reason or conscience, to guide himself in matters of the deepest moment. The Bible may therefere be expected to contain truths beyond the reach of reason. But since the faculties of the mind are, no less than revelation, the gifts of a Good Creator, it becomes a duty to examine the limits of their application, that they may distinguish what is within their sphere from what lies beyond it. They can never, unless through mistake, "come into collision with the Bible."

The importance of defining how far our faculties are competent to judge of the Attributes of the Creator will be evident from the following passage of Mr. Newman's:[3] Assuming that before the Bible can have any authority, "we must have independent means of knowing that God knows the truth, and is disposed to tell it to us," he goes on to argue that if we know thus much of God, independently of the Bible, "we obviously know a great deal more also. We know not only the existence of God, but much concerning His Character. For only by discovering that He has vir-

[1] "The Soul," by Mr. Newman, p. 3, 3d ed. [2] Ib. p. 41. [3] Ib. p. 40.

tues, similar in kind to human virtues, do we know of His Truthfulness and Goodness." . . . "The nature of the case implies that the human mind is competent to sit in *moral* and *spiritual* judgment on a professed revelation; and to decide, if the case seem to require it, in the following tone: 'This doctrine attributes to God that which we should all call harsh, cruel, or unjust in man; it is therefore intrinsically inadmissible: for if God may be what we should call *cruel*, He may equally well be what we should call *false*, and if so, of what use is His Word to us?'"

Some brief observations will be made with a view toward defining the limits of knowledge in this direction.

5. The natural faculties are able to discover that the First Cause of all things is an Intelligent Mind and a Living God. His Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness imply that it is impossible He can be cruel or untruthful. He is necessarily omniscient, and is too great to be the Author of confusion in His own works. His dealings with man will be in accordance with the powers of man's nature, and His dispensations such as to meet the soul's wants. He can not but act in conformity with that Law of Universal Order which has its eternal residence in Himself. And we have some knowledge of this law, but not a perfect knowledge.

We have some knowledge of it. We can often be sure of the distinction between right and wrong, between good and evil. Conscience has a natural preference for virtue and benevolence, and gives us some acquaintance with our duty to each other and to God. We have also an experience of the needs and aspirations of the soul. So far, then, as our moral knowledge extends, we are able to judge of the internal evidences of Christianity; and may, by the light of nature, discover its superiority to systems of false religion.

But we can not gain a perfect knowledge of the universal law. We can not understand all the conditions of order in the universe, nor all the conditions and relations of universal being. We can have but a very partial acquaintance with the relations in being between the creature and the Creator. We can not search the Internal Nature of the Almighty, nor comprehend the Harmony of

His Attributes in the Unity of His Being. Yet this perfect knowledge of God and of creation would be requisite to a universal moral judgment.

Even in our own nature and in experience, the moral judgment is often found to be limited. There is no infallible criterion of right and wrong. The law is not always written in clear and intelligible characters. Man is not, in fact, as God created him: different tribes and individuals sink to different depths of moral degeneracy. And besides the sources of error which lie hid in the corruption of human nature—even though the law were always clear, and the judgment competent to guide us in duty to God, and in the relations between man and man, yet we can not assume that even the perfect rules of human conduct can be any sufficient measure of the Divine Conduct. The perfect law of man depends upon the nature of man, and is applicable to every case of human duty. But there are depths in the Divine Nature, and mysteries in the Divine motives unsearchable by any human faculties.

We may see then that there is something which ill becomes us, in such arguments as have been quoted above. It is true, God can not be the Author of unnecessary suffering, any more than He can be untruthful. But to cause suffering or to permit it, may often, under particular circumstances, and for sufficient reasons, be not cruel but benevolent. What may be the sufficient reasons of the Divine Conduct is a question which can not fall within our province. Even in the conduct of a man, we know how difficult it is to take account of motives and circumstances which may be unknown. Yet, for all this, we may often be sure that he acts on good principles, and may know that he is a virtuous man. We may, in like manner, perceive that the agency of the Supreme Creator often commends itself to our moral judgment, as Holy, and Just, and Good; while yet, in other cases, we may have more reason than in any judgment of man, to lay the hand upon the mouth, and to bow in silent reverence.

6. We shall find these and similar principles of skepticism to be fruitful in results; and shall, in following chapters, endeavor to obviate some of the difficulties which they are made to furnish upon the Wisdom and Goodness of the Deity.

To know what we have to deal with, it is necessary, however painful to Christian readers, to make some extracts from recent publications.

The Divine Wisdom is called in question by remarks on what are said to be "the puerile conceptions"[1] and "Jewish prejudices"[2] of the Scriptures, which prove them, it is supposed, to be unworthy of their Divine Author. "They seldom," writes one, "sustain my mind long in that high region which it was seeking, but drag it down into an earthly atmosphere of low trifling thoughts, petty local interests, and individual or national resentments."[3]

And still more explicitly in frequent observations on human sinfulness, and God's dealings with it, which proceed on the assumption that the sin of man, or its punishment, is chargeable upon God. "All things," writes Mr. Parker, giving his account of what he calls "the popular theology"—"all things which God made work well except human nature; and that worked so badly that it fell as soon as it was put together. God must start anew," and so on till he comes to the conclusion—"The human race does not turn out as God designed or expected. It is a failure."[4] Mr. Newman also thinks that, according to the same theology, "God is made out to be unwise in creating" the human race, of whom so many will perish without remedy.[5]

7. The moral Goodness of the God of revelation is called in question by the same writers, in objections to the morality of the doctrine of Atonement. A large number of able writers, following many others in every age of the Church, concur in rejecting this fundamental article of the Christian faith. Mr. James Martineau pronounces it to be "morally and metaphysically absurd," and professes to give reasons for his opinion.[6]

Similar views are maintained by Mr. Theodore Parker, "minister of the Twenty-second Congregational Church, Boston, Mass." He often repudiates the idea of appearing, as he expresses it, "before the Omnipotent by attorney." He speaks of Jesus as "our

[1] "The Soul," p. ix. [2] Mr. Hennell's "Christian Theism," p. 5.
[3] Ib. p. 49.
[4] Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology; Sermons, p. 65, ed. 1853.
[5] Phases of Faith, p. 48, ed. 2d. [6] Rationale, ed. 4, p. 83.

friend, not our master, a brother who pleads with us, not an attorney who pleads with God, still less a Sacrifice for sins He never committed, and therefore could not expiate."[1]

Mr. Newman is no less free, in his opinion and criticism of the sacred doctrine,[2] and many others, from deistical ministers of churches down to atheists,[3] might be quoted to the same effect.

8. The Infinite Love of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is also a constant subject of criticism and reprobation with this school of writers, in connection with the doctrine of eternal punishment. This is the especial mark of their indignation. But few will go the length of Mr. Parker in his "Sermons" recently published. He here speaks with the freedom of a competent judge of the Almighty; and assumes the tone with which Christians may sympathize, when he applies it to an American slave-driver; but which becomes audacious and impious when directed to the Inscrutable Judgments of the Deity. Though denying its inspiration, he would probably admit the Scriptural Truth of God—"How Unsearchable are His Judgments, and His Ways past finding out:" yet he every where assumes that he has found out, and can estimate the Divine Judgments in their most mysterious agency.

Quotations from this work can only serve to pain and shock the Christian reader. We shall pay particular attention to some of its assumptions and assertions, but are compelled to omit the dreadful language in which he speaks of "the popular theology," and represents the belief in the God of Revelation as more pernicious than atheism.

Such is the purport of sermons preached at Boston, U. S., by an able and learned minister. And, as far as we can judge at a distance, not without effect. He dwells at much length upon the Divine Perfections, or rather his own views of them. The God of his theism is the God of Revelation, in His Self-existent Nature; but in that view of His Character, which rejects the Chris-

[1] Discourse of Religion, p. 175. [2] Phases, p. 56.

[3] Mr. Holyoake, for instance, whom Mr. Newman calls "a sincere atheist"—a title which it is not intended to question. Mr. Holyoake reciprocates—"If men can not see as I see, I shall be glad for them to see as Mr. Newman sees."

tian doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, the Judgment of God upon evil.

It can not but command attention, to make the Divine Character the foundation of practical morality and goodness. And it may be true that the eternal foundation of morality is not always set forth as it might be in Christian churches. The severance of religion and morality is the destruction of both. They are related to one another as means to end. And the Divine Perfections are the ultimate foundation of morality, as the harmony of Heaven is its aim and tendency. The truth of the Divine Perfections is therefore, of all, the most momentous to mankind. Mr. Parker dwells largely upon this topic, and admits that his theism is indebted to "the popular theology" for its best conceptions. His partial truths are not less likely to gain attention, and will not be less generally attractive, because stripped of every thing which renders them terrible to the evil-doer. The mystery of the Divine conduct renders it easy for a bold and unscrupulous writer to enunciate as unquestionable truths what are really assumptions beyond the knowledge of man; but which men easily accept as true, because they wish them to be true. Plausible arguments and willing listeners will never be wanting to those who can affirm with confidence that God is not good unless He have provided for the ultimate happiness of all His creatures; or that it is inconsistent with His Perfections that there should be any such being as Satan; or that such a being can not cause the ruin of any creature of God, without thereby proving himself to be God, or Superior to the Creator. Such assertions are not uncommon with modern infidelity. Shelley makes them the burden of his song; Mr. Parker argues them systematically, and his sermons are published in London as aids to free inquiry and progress.

Is it not, then, a hazardous experiment of philosophy to receive from the Christian Scriptures the great truth of the Perfect Goodness of God, and then to judge that this or that doctrine of the Scriptures is inconsistent with that Perfect Goodness? They who have taught us, what nature could not have taught, that God is Love, would seem to be the most competent judges as to what truths are consistent with His Love. But our critics of Revela-

tion would argue in the opposite direction. Jesus, they say, was very wise and good, but still a man like one of us. His teaching must, therefore, be examined and sifted. The Bible is one of many noble books which have assisted the spiritual development of the race, but still a human book. It has its excellencies, and it has its errors. We must "separate its pearls from its chaff," and avoid the popular idolatry of the day—Bibliolatry.

But is not the very fact, that the Scriptures alone have been able to bring home the truth of the Divine Goodness to the masses of mankind, and to give it currency in the world, a strong evidence of their Divine Authority? At all events, this criticism is inconsistent. Its advocates receive from Jesus Christ the highest truth they know of God, and then reject the God whom He reveals. They learn from Jesus that "God is Love," and then they say that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is a "malignant" God. Wishing to write with candor, they affirm that Jesus was the greatest of the sons of men, a Chief Teacher and Benefactor of the race, and then they accuse Him of self-contradiction, on the very doctrine which He lived and died to bring home to the hearts of men. Error is common to man: the greatest minds have held error along with truth. But great men are not wont to contradict themselves on the very point on which they are great. If Jesus have taught us that God is Love, it is all the more fearful that He forewarns us of the consequences of wickedness.

9. Infidelity had long affected to treat the Bible with disdain, and the Saviour of mankind as an impostor. This form of unbelief could only become popular in countries where the Scriptures had been concealed from men by an unfaithful Church, and were but little known. Its unfairness was too palpable for those who are familiar with Holy Writ, and accustomed to judge for themselves. Such statements were sure to be examined and found false. Recent skepticism has here an advantage over its motley predecessors. It assumes that tone of candor and universal toleration which always appear enlightened, and are in this age so popular. It admits all that is good in Christianity; it only seeks to purify it of its errors—errors, however, which may well be excused, for

they are human, and were to be expected at the time of its origin. They are sure to give way before the advancing philosophy, the higher moral development, the refined criticism of this later age of the world. Already the popular systems of Christianity are breaking up. The "popular theology" is tottering. It no longer appeals to "unimpeachable evidence," nor trusts to the open field of conflict. It deprecates discussion. It would preserve, by a discreet silence, a belief which is, at all events, beneficial. "Popular Christianity" is even now in "its transition state." It will cease to exist as a distinctive system. It will combine with other systems in the catholicity of thought. "The shades of Athenian sages will at length receive, with friendly arms, their ally of Nazareth." "Theists of every nation, Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, or Chinese, can meet upon common ground." And fortunately for the great mass who call themselves Christians, but have nothing of Christianity except the name—fortunately for them, the name may be retained. "Jesus," we are told, "was a Theist, and drew much of His doctrine from His Own observation of God's works." Christian Theism may therefore express the convictions of all "who admit no authority above that of man's reason, and no revelation besides that of nature, yet listen to and honor one of the best expounders of God and nature in the Man of Nazareth."[1]

This attempt to retain the name of Christianity without its substance will appear, to many, a dishonest artifice. Its author maintains that his is the true view of the effect and intention of Christ's Mission, and that of Christians in all ages mistaken. And he may consider that his Deistical scheme has, at least, as good right to the name of Christian as the belief of the many nominal Christians who are practically atheists. Unhappily, the present state of the Christian world leaves us but little right to accuse him of false pretenses, however we may deny the justice of his claim.

The subject proposed to us[2] directs attention to that practical

[1] Mr. Hennell's "Christian Theism," p. 54, 59.

[2] "From the whole, to point out the inferences most necessary for, and useful to mankind." Founder's deed.

atheism, which takes the name of Christian, as well as to speculative atheism; and it may be due to Truth to admit that there are worse evils than even skepticism, and that this skeptical school includes men who are not only eloquent and thoughtful, but show marks of good feeling and good principle, which, in many a so-called Christian, you will seek in vain. There are men among them whom one could trust, and every one knows how little confidence is to be placed in many who have no more of Christianity than the name. It is a matter of every day's experience, that men may call themselves Christians, and may even make loud professions, who act habitually on motives and principles which many a heathen or infidel would repudiate with indignation.

If this be true, we shall not serve the cause of truth by blinking at it. It is no disparagement to Christianity that self-interested persons make it subservient to their secular schemes. It is often an involuntary homage, that human nature disguises itself under the name and show of it. Nor would it be fair to contrast the virtuous deist with the inconsistent professor of a faith which, by its many noble examples of goodness, has done honor to humanity.

To false professions and empty forms of religion, wherever they may be found, an infidel school like this is the natural and proper corrective. If there were nothing better than these in the Christian Church, the infidel might well shout his *Io triumphe*. It would be time to look for another dispensation. But very different is the Christianity of the Bible, and, thanks to God, of numerous Christians who adorn their station in life. False religion always sows the seeds of unbelief. The great apostasy of the latter days will be a judgment on the false pretenses of religious prosperity. But the true Church, throughout the world, will survive the tempests of opinion, and, if need be, also of persecution.

Christianity, from the first sermon of Jesus upon earth, and beyond any other form of religion which the world has known, has had to contend with the bitter enmity, the plausible false philosophy of men, and with the cruel tyranny of power, and has survived the attacks of ages. All the powers of evil have been arrayed against it without success. It will also outlive this modern school,

with all its candid admissions and confident assumptions; though one may tell us that "the world is in a state of transition from the belief in Christ as God;" another, that "miracles and prophecy are losing their influence over the minds of men," that "there has been a great mistake, for God's Works, and these only, are His Word;" and another, that the God of Revelation is "finite and malignant, its theology dreadful, and the days of its foul doctrines numbered." It will survive what are more dangerous by far, the coldness, the indifference, the false and treacherous adherence of formal and self-interested professors. Establishments may fall, churches may fall, and where they are unfaithful to Eternal Truth and Holiness, where they make religion the pretense of world ambition and dominion, assuredly they will fall. Self-seeking secularism, under the guise of religion—a more odious form of it than the atheistic—will soon have had their day. They may live on in impunity, and in high station, while intelligence is confined to the few; for churches little faithful to their Divine Commission have, in many countries, been powerful instruments of ambition, and convenient safeguards of abuses. But the mind of man, with powers yet untried and unknown, is beginning to rouse itself from the sleep of ages. The mind of millions, long dormant, already moves as though it lived. The moral and spiritual power of the race will, one day, be as great as the material power which has been already set in action. In that day—and once dawned, it will quickly rise—the light of heaven will discover the dark corners of the earth. It will then be seen that immoral professors of Christianity are worse atheists, and ought to be so accounted, than men who openly deny the truth; as an open and honest enemy is not so much to be dreaded or despised as a hypocritical and self-seeking friend. False and empty forms of religion will fall, no doubt; and the sooner the better. The world will be freer, and wiser, and happier for the change. But Christianity will not fall. It is the reunion of man with God. It is the beginning of that perfect religion which fits him for a higher life. It is the fulfillment of the Eternal Purpose of God in his creation, and in his relation to other intelligent creatures of the same Creator.

Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son of the Eternal God. Whatever

may have been the prevalence of atheism and irreligion during eighteen centuries, the History of Christianity is all the more a testimony, that there was something beyond human in the words He uttered with so much confidence, and at the time he did—"Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

CHAPTER V.

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF HUMAN SINFULNESS WITH REFERENCE TO THE DIVINE PERFECTIONS.

1. Perfect Moral Nature.—2. Course of Degeneracy in Individuals.—3. Degeneracy of Tribes.—4. Original Condition of Man.—5. Fruitless Questions.—6. Mr. F. Newman on Human Sinfulness.—7. Original Sin.—8. Objection to the Divine Justice.—9. Objection to the Divine Wisdom.—10. Other Objections.

1. THE nature and effects of human sinfulness are patent in the life of every man, and are written on every page of history. It is to speak in language understood by all, to say that no people nor individual has been morally perfect, and that different tribes and individuals are in different moral conditions, and rise or fall to higher or lower degrees of imperfection.

A perfect moral state must be one which combines a clear understanding of the law of right, in its relations to the moral agent, with affections to admire and prefer it, an aversion to whatever is opposed to it, and an active will to obey it. Only One Example of such perfection is to be found in the history of man. That men know their duty, and admire virtuous conduct in others, far more than they fulfill it in their own lives—that talking or feeling is not doing, is a sort of natural proverb, which may be found variously expressed in many languages.

2. But it is well known that different tribes of men, as well as different individuals, sink to different depths of depravity. A virtuous man may, in the course of time, become habitually virtuous; till in all his actions he thinks and does what is right without effort. He grows more and more averse to evil and inclined

to goodness, while his moral understanding becomes more and more sensitive to the distinctions of right and wrong. A vicious man, on the contrary, is always moving in the opposite course. At first, perhaps, alive to the reality, and sensitive to the beauty of truth and justice and every virtue, he enters with hesitation on a career of mischief, in defiance of better feelings and judgments. The second immoral action is generally easier than the first. The affections are gradually depraved; the mind loses its strength of will; and, unless it be impressed by some new motive, or roused, by reflection, to some strong effort, the final result is always a total disregard of duties which were once held sacred, a hardening against self-reproach, a recklessness of consequences, which seemed once of all things the most fearful; till, at length, the understanding is darkened, it loses all perfection of moral distinctions, it becomes blind to all difference of right and wrong; it regards the distinction as one of mere name or fashion, and looks back upon the remorse it felt as a silly delusion, without foundation in the nature of things—perhaps a delusion of "the theological or fictitious condition." Every one knows something of this course of evil, so commonly disregarded, so full of meaning to the thoughtful. Every one is familiar with the indifference of inveterate sinfulness, and the cool remorselessness of practiced crime.

3. Different tribes or people are also, like individuals, changed in character in the course of time; and are to be found in various conditions of moral imperfection, and various stages of degeneracy. Many tribes have possessed the developed understanding, and the soul to appreciate goodness, while debasing passions and lusts have domineered without restraint. Others have been almost destitute of the moral judgment, and of all respect for truth or virtue. But these are the tribes which are degraded beneath the brutes. They have not, perhaps, exceeded the former in the outrages of vice and crime. Lust and malignity can not have been more woefully dominant over human nature than in the civilized heathen of classic times;[1] although other people have sunk deeper in the forfeiture of those faculties and endowments which are distinctive of human-

[1] As depicted, Romans i., and by classical writers, especially Thucydides, iii. 82–84.

ity. The Gospel, and it only, has saved Europe from the savage barbarism of Central Africa.

Some writers have appealed to these degenerate tribes in disproof of an innate sense of duty. ' Thinking it not universal, they have considered it the production of national habits, education, or other accidental influences. But, in truth, the corruption of nations proves no more than that of individuals. Perhaps none have been quite destitute of all feeling of duty; but if it were so, it would not decide upon the natural constitution of humankind. Nations, as well as individuals, have their peculiar characters, which are transmitted from generation to generation, as we see on a less scale in families; and, no doubt, the degeneracy of tribes as of individuals, may proceed to the extinction of the best qualities of man, or, at least, to their constant repression from early infancy, by the prevalence of vicious customs and monstrous immoralities. But in tribes, as well as in individuals, the degradation of human nature is manifest. The true inference would appear to be, not that mankind are by nature destitute of all conscience, but that God deals with His creatures as a race, according to some Great Plan, unfolding itself from age to age. It suggests that a Divine purpose is to be fulfilled, not only in the life of each individual, but in the whole course of the world's history, and in those miraculous interpositions of the Almighty by which its history has been so much influenced. Indeed, such a design might be suggested by the very fact, that mankind exist, not as distinct and independent creatures, but as one race of beings, bound in the ties of common descent and consanguinity. That such a supposition is not inconsistent with the Divine Love to every creature has been already shown.

4. Upon this subject, then, we meet with the very interesting and important question: What was the original condition of man, as he stood forth from the hands of the Creator? Has the history of the race been one of corruption, or of development, upon the whole? On this question hinges the whole difference of the Scriptural accounts of God, and His relations to mankind; and the anti-Christian notions of a Creator of simple benevolence, with a race of imperfect creatures who need no supernatural as-

sistance, but are progressive through their natural faculties and powers.

Holy Scripture gives an account of the commencement of evil in the world. It is its distinct and constant doctrine, that God did not create man as he is. "God said, Let us make man in our Image, after our likeness." "And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good." This is not like the style of a human composition. Its dignity of simplicity and brevity is what may be believed to be Divine. Man would have said nothing, or would have said more of the great mystery of evil; God passes it over with a word. He removes the evil from Himself; but adds nothing to silence objections, or to satisfy curiosity.

From the account of the sinless creation the inspired writer goes on to the Fall of man, and indicates, with the same simple brevity, that sin had become the inheritance of the race. "God created man in His Own Image;" "Adam begat a son in his own likeness;" but between the creation of Adam and the first birth, transgression had incurred the sentence—"Thou shalt surely die." That this account of the fall is assumed by the writers of the New Testament as the foundation of the Christian doctrine, is known to every student of Scripture. "In Adam all die." The human race had become "alienated from the life of God." A new creation could alone restore it. It was only "in Christ" that all could be "made alive." The teaching of Scripture respecting spiritual life and death contains evident intimation of something beyond the reach of human knowledge. This is no more than we might expect beforehand; and the certainty that we can not fathom the depths of life, nor follow the plans of Divine Agency, ought to restrain presumptuous questioning of revelation.

5. It is not necessary to enter into the speculations upon this doctrine, by which Christians have amused themselves or provoked one another. The question whether Original Righteousness was a natural gift or a supernatural aid, whether the corruption of humanity consisted in a mental or a corporeal taint, have led to abundant speculation; and curiosity has been pushed even farther than such questions as these. It is difficult to distinguish

the natural with exact precision from the supernatural, and the distinction is without meaning before the establishment of a course of nature. Nor can we expect to know all the effects of sin upon the soul, when we know so little of the springs and progress of disease, or of the full signification of the word death, in its application to the body. We are wholly ignorant of the manner in which the life of soul or body issues forth from the Source of all being.

6. Attempts have been made to represent the Scriptural doctrine of human corruption as inconsistent with the Perfections of the Creator. But these objections are generally founded upon misapprehension. Thus Mr. Newman writes[1]—"It is of great importance to discern that what is *popularly* called 'the total depravity of human nature,' is more correctly the essential eternal imperfection of every created existence; and that that imperfection which is strictly necessary must not be appropriated by us as Sin." This opinion will be found to rest upon a mistake respecting moral perfection. "In order to be morally perfect," he continues, "we should need at once infinite wisdom, and affections of infinite power; and these are the incommunicable properties of God; hence every creature—angels and archangels, beatified saints, and Adam fresh from his Maker's hand—every one is morally imperfect, and, if the vulgar phraseology were justifiable, would deserve to be called sinful. Perfection, like Omnipotence, inheres in God alone; in this sense, He only is Holy."

The writer goes on to remark on the calamitous error of confounding unwilling imperfection with sin, and points out, as an effect of the current "Bibliolatry," the mischiefs of this confusion to upright souls, who, finding they are still imperfect, fall into a bad conscience, which results either in a hypocritical routine of religion, or a miserable self-despair. The consequences follow so easily from the premises, they seem so natural, and are depicted with so much ingenuousness and simplicity of style, that readers who have not time to think much upon the subject are very likely to be led to the conclusion, which many writers would be glad to establish, that the Christian faith, instead of meeting the

[1] The Soul, p. 55.

wants of man's religious nature, and conducing to his moral improvement, is rather calculated to foster hypocrisy and formalism, and to wound and crush the upright souls who trust to it. Such is the opinion of one who, from the zealous profession of the Christian religion, has sunk, step by step, into pure Deism, yet maintains with it a belief in a natural religion of Divine Communion. His readers, it is to be feared, will not generally be those who apprehend that Christianity may be a check on moral progress.

The error appears here to lie in the assumption that infinite wisdom, or any infinite faculties, are essential to moral perfection. These might go to constitute what might perhaps be called an essential or absolute perfection—a perfection of being; but morally, a creature must surely be considered perfect, when it is in exact adjustment to universal nature in all the relations of the position in which God has placed it; when its faculties, to the extent of their power, combine in harmonious action in themselves and with the world which environs it; and all its agency is directed, within its sphere, to fulfill the Will of God. Such moral perfection is certainly conceivable, and, reason naturally conjectures, is the actual condition of all the creatures as they proceed from the hands of the Creator.

Mr. Newman has another passage to the same effect.[1] "Man is finite and crippled on all sides; and frailty in one kind causes frailty in another. Deficient power causes deficient knowledge, deficient knowledge betrays him into false opinion, and entangles him into false positions." No doubt, error may arise from deficiency of knowledge; yet it can not need omniscience to guard against error, but only a clear knowledge on all points which fall within the finite sphere of human life and action. It is certainly conceivable that good instincts, and an understanding sound within its province, may be sufficient to guide a finite being in all its conduct; and it can not be assumed to be impossible that limited powers may be exactly balanced and harmonized by the Creator, so as to fulfill His Will in all the movements of their life. It is therefore credible that man, and even the inferior parts of creation, were all

[1] Phases of Faith, p. 141, 2d ed.

at first "very good," or perfect, in the Sight of Him who "saw every thing that He had made."

7. Nor can there be any sufficient objection to the name Original Sin. The line must be drawn in theory, as we may be sure it will in the Divine Judgment, between the natural disorder of human nature and the willful sins of the individual; but there can be nothing objectionable, if we consider the perfection of the Divine Nature and Agency, in defining sin to be, whatever, in the nature or agency of intelligent beings, is in opposition to the Divine Will, or in discord with the Harmony of His works, whether in any particular instance it be voluntary or involuntary. *From our human point of view*, we might think it sufficient to call only actual wrongdoing by the name of sin, and the original fault of human nature by that of weakness or frailty. Yet even in this case the word sin would include involuntary as well as voluntary actions; for every one knows that prolonged habits of vice destroy the power of the will, and enslave reason to passion; yet none would refuse to call an action sinful because committed by a man who has become the slave of vice. But the Word of God looks from a higher point of view, and, speaking of sin with reference to the Creator, regards it as including every corruption of His Perfect Work, whether through individual agency or in its transmitted effects. That there is universal disorder in human nature can not be denied. That mental qualities and dispositions, mental disorders and imperfections, may be hereditary, is a fact as ordinary as the transmission of bodily constitution or resemblance, of longevity or disease. There is nothing irrational in the doctrine of Scripture, that Infinite Perfection can not have created a race of beings in moral disorder; nor in the doctrine that He can not regard what is imperfect with complacency. In His dealings with mankind, as well as with every man, "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

8. It is a very old objection, but still reiterated, that this doctrine, in making the children suffer for the sins of their parents, charges the Creator with injustice. But without reason. The natural condition of man is a matter of fact; and whether it be regarded as sinful or as imperfect, is immaterial to the question

of the Divine Justice. If it be not inconsistent with it to have created man as he is—if, notwithstanding the Perfections of the Creator, sinfulness and imperfection be inseparable from the creature, it can not give a higher view of the Divine Character, to regard sinfulness and imperfection as original in every man, than as transmitted from generation to generation.

But the full answer to this objection is furnished by revelation, which confirms the truth of conscience, that every man will be accountable for his own works, and will not be responsible for any hereditary taint of evil. It also instructs us that as all are fallen through the fall of one, so the remedy is coextensive with the disease. It is well known that the writers of the New Testament regard the doctrine of universal sinfulness as correlative with that of universal redemption. They appear studiously to connect the two doctrines, and to pass from the one to the other; as if they would intimate that we may neither regard ourselves as ruined beyond recovery, nor judge of the Divine Wisdom or Goodness in the world, without taking account of our restoration to a state of moral trial by Jesus Christ, according to the eternal purpose of God to redeem mankind by His Son.

9. There is yet another point to be noticed, which takes the form of an objection to the Divine Wisdom. We find it in Mr. Parker:[1] "All things which God made work well except human nature, and that works so badly that it fell as soon as it was put together." We meet with it also in Mr. Newman;[2] who says of the doctrine of sinfulness, that "Calvin supposes God to have created the most precious thing on earth in *unstable equilibrium*. . . . . Surely all nature proclaims that if God planted any spiritual nature at all in man, it was in *stable equilibrium*, able to right itself when deranged."

This is expressed in terms which charge the Almighty with folly, if He be the Creator of a race which fell so easily and universally. It is a sufficient answer to ask—Are we competent judges of the Divine Purpose in the existence of man? To know whether it be inconsistent with His Wisdom to have created a race of beings so frail, we must know that there could not be sufficient reasons for His procedure. But who is to discover to us

[1] Theism, etc., p. 65. [2] Phases, p. 60.

His purpose in the creation of our race? And let it not be said, as it often is, that we are unreasonable in flying from the known to the unknown, and taking refuge in a *perhaps*. The objection to the Wisdom of the Creator in making the world as it is, can only be answered with reference to the question, *Why He so made it;* and this question can not, in the nature of things, receive its answer from the world. The Purpose of God was prior to the creation—His Will determined by motives necessarily Superior to it. Revelation alone can give us information upon so mysterious a subject; and it will be one inquiry of succeeding chapters, whether it do not discover a great Plan of the Almighty, which is now being fulfilled in the existence of this world of ours, and is dependent upon that very truth to which objection is so often taken—that God made man upright, but liable to fall; and constituted him such in his nature, that the sin of one involved all his posterity in its consequences.

10. Other objections to the doctrine of human degeneracy must here be passed over, as foreign to our subject. But it would not be difficult to show that the differences of Christians upon human sinfulness are often very frivolous and unnecessary. And with reference to other objections of skepticism, it may suffice to observe, what is implied in the preceding, that if there be any current opinion that "man naturally hates God, hates other men, hates truth with his reason, justice with his conscience, love with his affections, holiness with his soul; loves falsehood, injustice, hate, and wickedness, all for their own sake, and not as means to an end—hates God and only loves the Devil"[1]—if there be a current opinion that virtuous and lovely qualities are in themselves sinful, or that any natural power or faculty of man is evil in itself; that "God disowns my nature as not His work but the devil's work, and thereby tells me that He is not my Creator, and teaches that I owe Him no obedience, no worship, no trust;"[2] if there be a custom with any Christians of presenting the doctrine of human corruption in a form which must discourage virtuous endeavor, and "snap the sinews of moral effort,"[3] such opinions

[1] Theism, Atheism, etc., p. 64. [2] Phases of Faith, p, 60.
[3] Mr. Holyoake; "Christianity and Secularism," p. 133.

and such custom are as contrary to the Word of God as to the moral nature of man.

Reason and revelation concur that God is the Universal Creator—the Author and Giver of every power and faculty of soul and body. Experience and revelation concur that there is confusion in man's nature. Humanity in its ruin calls to God for deliverance, revelation discovers a remedy, and all men are, in some degree, partakers of its benefits. Every motive to moral endeavor and virtuous practice which can be found in the world and in the moral nature of man, is approved by revelation, and confirmed in the system of Redemption by new motives, far higher, more powerful, more inspiring, than any which are to be found in humanity.

Man owes the debt of holy obedience to God as the Creator who made him upright, much more as his Deliverer from moral ruin. But we shall recur to this truth. It must be admitted upon the present subject, that the fall of all, through the sin of one—the moral disorder of a creation which was at first very good—could not have taken place without the foreknowledge and permission of Infinite Wisdom. This truth would seem to indicate what might be anticipated from conceptions of Immutable Wisdom, that there is an eternal purpose of the Divine agency in the Great Plan of ages.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEVELOPMENT THEORY OF HUMAN NATURE.

1. Account of it.—2. Its Advocates.—3. Analogy of Material Development.—4. A false Analogy.—5. God not the Creator of Savages.—6. Appeal to History.—7. The Savage Tribes. Fetichism.—8. Classical Records.—9. Division of Weeks, and Custom of Sacrifice. — 10. Golden Age.—11. Traditions of the Flood.—12. Other Traditions.—13. Testimony of Indian Literature. — 14. Mr. Parker on Natural Progress.—15. Classification of Religions.

1. THE difference between the Scriptural doctrine of the fall, and the opinion that man was originally imperfect, may seem, at first sight, to be one of little importance. But it touches the foun-

dation of the whole system of revelation, and extends to the question of Christianity or infidelity.

Little differences are sometimes the turning-points between a system of truth and one of error. It is so in the present case. The Christian system is so consistent with itself; its principal doctrines are so closely bound together, and one of them so constantly implied in another, that to deny the degeneracy of man, is to reject the doctrine of his supernatural restoration.

The doctrine of original imperfection lies at the root of a current theory in great favor with anti-Christian writers. It is that of the natural development of mankind. It denies that the works of God were originally very good; affirming that man did not start from civilization and from the worship of One God, but from a low savage state of cannibalism and nature-worship. It thus removes the origin of evil from the responsibility of man, and consequently charges it either on the imperfection of nature, if this be imagined to be self-existent, or on the Creator, if the system be one of theism. It manifestly charges sin and evil directly on the Creator, to suppose Him to have called into being a horde of the lowest and vilest savages, who could have no possible escape from the worst vices and horrors incident to mankind. From this state there is supposed to have been a slow and gradual development of the race, during many thousands of years. Some advocates of the theory show a partiality for the Chinese and Egyptian chronologies, which afford a longer period for the supposed progression.

Placed then originally in a state so low and wretched, and left to the guidance of his natural powers—or rather to those imperfect capacities of his original nature—which were the germs of his present faculties, he owes no debt to God, and can not be under His displeasure for the sin and misery of the world. He needed no Divine interference to bring him aid or rescue. Having advanced thus far in its natural strength, the race is to go on progressing to a glorious future, in which ignorance will be dispelled and evil conquered, by the might of science and civilization. Man is not fallen, but imperfect; not degenerate, but progressive; and, at the present early age of the race—for though the past must be

immensely prolonged to bring it from savage life to what it is, yet the future needs to be prolonged far more, to carry it from its present state to perfection—in the present early age of the race, we can form no conception of the grandeur of its ultimate destiny.

2. This theory finds support in "the Positive Philosophy," where it is briefly and dogmatically stated, after the usual manner of that book. "The theological period of humanity could begin no otherwise than by a complete, and usually very durable state of pure Fetichism.[1] . . . Some have been so perverse as to place monotheism farthest back, and fetichism as a corruption of polytheism; but such inversions are inconsistent with both the laws and the facts of human history. The real starting-point is, in fact, much humbler than is commonly supposed, man having every where begun by being a fetich worshiper, and a cannibal."[2] The "philosophy" thus talks of the laws of nature and the facts of history, but leaves its readers to seek them for themselves.

The theory is also adopted by Mr. Parker, and is an essential part of his spurious theism; but neither does he undertake to reconcile it with philosophy or with facts.

But though the opinion is very confidently maintained, we shall search in vain for evidence of its truth. Its best support is, in general, nothing better than imaginary difficulties and inconsistencies of Christian doctrines; which, however, are inconsistent only when they are misunderstood, and difficult only when they relate to the "Judgments Unsearchable." Without doubt, the theory has a recommendation to those who would understand every thing. In pretending to dispense with revelation or supernatural intervention, it reduces the whole plan and course of the world to the ordinary laws of nature and of man, and brings them within the scope of the understanding. But the least reflection might show that every common fact of existence is as incomprehensible as the Divine agency in the dispensations of Grace.

3. The notion of human progress by natural development is apt

[1] "Writers who have attempted to classify heathen religions assign the lowest place to the Fetich worship, the adoration of a lifeless corporeal object." Schlegel's Phil. of Hist., lect. vi. [2] Pos. Phil., ii. p. 186.

to be suggested by the developments of the material world.[1] The mind, prone to argue by analogy, and loving to reduce many operations of nature to one law, may transfer the notion of evelopment from matter to mind. To carry out the theory consistently, we must reduce the two developments to one succession of being, extending through all the changes of existence, from its simplest original condition. We thus fall on the material systems, which make mind to be but an evolution of matter, and suppose the world of life as well as that of matter—the world, animate and inanimate, to have been educed by slow progression from eternal atoms.

Mr. Parker, however, and even "the Positive Philosophy," deny the unity of man and matter. The latter admits no state previous to fetichism, no state "in which the human species was altogether material, and incapable of any speculation whatever." The existence of man and matter are its ultimate facts; it knows nothing beyond them. Mr. Parker agrees with it to this point, but here ingrafts the development theory upon his speculative theism. It is with this deistic form of the theory that we are at present concerned.

4. The analogy to which allusion has been made may be turned with far greater force in the opposite direction. Intelligence, love, and the various affections of mind, are incommensurable with all known properties of matter; but, though very distant shadows, are, in some degree, similar to the Eternal Perfections. The theist who believes the Creator to be a Spirit, has more reason to expect that finite mind will be created in the perfection of its nature, or, as the Scripture declares, in the image of God, than that it will be subject, like matter, to pass through long ages of development.

And there is another distinction between mind and matter which deserves attention. In the long series of progressions and revolutions, by which the material world has advanced to its present state, it is the same identical matter from first to last, which continues under the various forms of nature. Whatever have been the strife of elements in the long periods of geology, whatever the changes and catastrophes of the globe, it is probable that not one

[1] Mr. Parker notices this analogy. Discourse, p. 69.

particle of its substance has been added or removed. Minds, on the contrary, are individually distinct; each possesses in itself an independence of that causality which belongs to matter. There is, therefore, no probability in the development of mind, according to any analogy of the material world.

5. But it is unphilosophical (at least Plato thought so), if it be not also impious, to regard God as the Creator of a race of savage beings, who can not attain to the proper faculties of their nature unless through the confusion and horrors of long ages of barbarism, and the misery of many generations. Reason naturally anticipates that the works of Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness must be in perfect order and harmony. Such has been the opinion of the wisest of mankind without revelation.[1] It is more consistent with theism to believe that God can not be the Author of confusion, more reasonable to seek the source of misery and strife in the free-will of man, than to make it the natural and necessary result of the original conditions of creation. It gives us a higher conception of the Divine Goodness to know God as the Creator of a harmonious and perfect world, though it should be ruined by the sinfulness of its inhabitants, than of a world which, in its millions of people, must necessarily be a state of savage barbarism and cannibalism. It would appear that the Scriptural doctrine of the fall is the very truth which is wanted to reconcile the universal sinfulness of man, and the proneness to evil even of the best dispositions, and under circumstances the most favorable to virtue, with the necessary perfection of the Divine Works.

6. But let us direct attention to some of the facts to which we have been referred. The theory meets with its decided failure, in its opposition to all that is known of the history of the world. Its advocates can not point to a single instance in which mankind have risen from savage to civilized life without the aid of those influences which the Christian regards as of supernatural origin. Such, indeed, has been the influence of the Scriptures in the world, that it is difficult to find the people who have not, directly or indirectly, been indebted to them. It may be stated as a fact, that

[1] Thus Plato, besides the motto of this volume—Θέμις οὐτ' ἦν οὔτ' ἐστὶ τῷ ἀρίστῳ ὁρᾶν ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ κάλλιστον. Timæus, cap. x.

all civilized nations of ancient or modern times can be shown *to have derived instruction, either from the Scriptures or from Scriptural traditions.* The people who have been found destitute of such traditions, and beyond the reach of the Christian revelation, are always reduced to a savage condition; and they who have possessed the traditions alone, without the aids of more recent revelations, give evidences in their history or in their records, sometimes in very distinct terms, that their nation has passed through a course, not of development, but of degradation.

If these be facts in the history of mankind, they will go far to show that all human goodness, religious, moral, or intellectual, is owing, not merely to any powers of humanity which can be called natural, but either to the primitive education of the race by God, or to the frequent interpositions by which He has saved it from utter ruin.

7. It would seem to be no light evidence of the supernatural origin of the Scriptures, that the most highly developed and cultivated people of the world, not excepting our modern speculative deists, and, it may be added, they who have gained the highest and purest knowledge of God, are precisely those who have fallen within the light of the Bible; while the most degraded and debased are those who have been wholly beyond its reach. The savage tribes of Central Africa, of the South Sea Islands, with some of the American tribes, exhibit the human race in its lowest stage of corruption. In many of these tribes, the only evidences of the religious element of humanity are discovered in traces of a wild nature-worship, or a fetich worship of corporeal objects, shown in the superstitious use of amulets and magical instruments,[1] but without religious rites, without the idea of a Supreme Being or any conception of creation. Others of them have been found to possess a religion, like that of the Mexicans, which consisted in horrible rites, to appease the fury of evil deities.

Such is the condition of man when he has been farthest removed from all influence of the Jewish or Christian Religions, and so isolated from the rest of mankind, that primitive tradition was less likely to be retained. Perhaps the simplest and most con-

[1] Robertson's America, Book iv. chap. vii.

vincing answer to the development theory is to be found in the judgment, which common sense can with difficulty avoid, that these degraded tribes could never have attained a higher civilization, or a purer form of religion, unless through commerce with people superior to themselves. At all events, it is a fact that no such instance of development is to be found in the history of man. One, indeed, has been mentioned—that of the Jews "in their early and remarkable passage from fetichism to polytheism and monotheism!"[1] But this, of all the revolutions of history, is the last to be alleged as a proof of mere *human* development. Whether there were not something more than human in this instance, is the very question in dispute. Indeed, Mr. Parker mentions it only in an incidental way.

8. Let us look back, then, to the civilized nations of mankind. We need say nothing of modern civilization; every one knows that in Europe it has grown and spread with Christianity. In modern India and China it has certainly not advanced since the dawn of the Christian religion; and, whatever proofs of degeneracy may be found among them, there is none of progress. Their best and earliest writings remain the same as two thousand years ago.

But we may briefly advert to the records of classical civilization, although they have frequently engaged the attention of Christian writers. These records abound in Scriptural traditions, sometimes much corrupted, it is true, but too numerous, and too often coincident to be mistaken. The early Christian writers did not fail to enlarge upon this fact in their apologies and exhortations to the heathen. They often accused the poets and philosophers of borrowing their best light from inspired sources;[2] and we have enough of ancient literature remaining to show that either there was good foundation for the charge, or that the classical writers possessed traditions of the events recorded in the Scriptures.

[1] Mr. Parker's Discourse, p. 36.

[2] Hence Clement applies to them the words "thieves and robbers" (St. John, x. 8), because they borrowed without acknowledgment. (Strom. i. xvii.)

These remains contain frequent and distinct corroborations of the early history of the Bible. The most remarkable of these are the universal prevalence, in all nations civilized and uncivilized, of the seven-day division of time, and of the custom of sacrifice. Numerous other traditions are to be found, and, among them, direct testimonies to the primitive excellence of creation, and to human degeneracy.

9. Josephus affirms that every city of the Grecians or barbarians followed the Jewish custom of resting on the seventh day.[1] Clement of Alexandria quotes Homer, Hesiod, and Callimachus in proof of the fact.[2] Theophilus of Antioch mentions the seventh day as held in esteem by all men, "though they know not for what reason." And it is certain, from other writers, that the hebdomadal division of time was universal, wherever trace of civilization was to be found. But we have a proof of this in every-day life, more immediate and convincing than any evidence from ancient writers. The names of our days, in fact, convey to us a tradition which belonged to our fathers before the Christian era, and thus connect us with the early institutions of the world.

This custom alone is fatal to the development theory. It is not an institution of cannibals and savages; yet its universality shows that it must have come down from the earliest age of the race. It can not be accounted for except as a positive institution of an early and civilized age.

10. The original perfection of the race is directly testified in the common tradition of the Golden Age. It is probable that a race which has degenerated will retain confused recollections of a state gone by. "The Positive Philosophy"[4] and Mr. Parker[5] attempt to evade this evidence, by ascribing it to the tendency of the mind to admire and aggrandize the past. This is arbitrary, and not very satisfactory. The tradition is too general to have originated in a delusion, especially among various and distant people, who are supposed to have slowly emerged from savage life. It is of great weight in the absence of evidence to the contrary.

[1] C. Apion. ii. 40. [2] Stromata, v. xiii. p. 600.
[3] Ad Autol. ii. 12. Also Tertullian, Apol. xvi.
[4] Vol. ii. p. 76. [5] Disc., p. 70.

Besides, it admits of question whether this very tendency to admire the past be not in itself an evidence of human degeneracy. If the race had been developed from cannibalism, would not the human mind, in its long struggle with wretchedness, have acquired the disposition to think meanly of the past?

11. Other traditions corroborative of the sacred history are very remarkable, especially those of the Great Deluge. They are handed down from ancient writers of various countries, some of whom mention several of the particulars, which agree closely with the Mosaic account of the flood. Thus Eusebius, quoting from Josephus, says that the flood and the ark are mentioned by all Gentile historians; of whom Berosus the Chaldean gives an account of it, and states that the ark rested on a mountain of Armenia, where a part of it still remained in his own time, and that the pitch of it was often carried away and used as a charm.[1]

12. Traditions also remain, from various sources, of the fall of man, of the original length of life, the commencement of idolatry, the Tower of Babel, and the dispersion.[2] These and others have often been cited by Christian writers, and need not have been alluded to at present if they were not quietly ignored by those who tell us it is "perverse" to place monotheism at the beginning of man's religious history; and, though they give us no evidence on the other side, that "such an inversion is inconsistent with facts."

It is not necessary to our case that we should be able to prove each of these ancient testimonies to be authentic. It may be expected that such traditions will be involved in some obscurity. Ancient fragments, which have come down from the remote past, can not rest on the clear evidence of more recent history. But

[1] Eusebius, Præp. Evang. ix. xi. quoting Joseph. Antiq. lib. i. Eusebius has here a collection of ancient records, of which a summary is given by Grotius de Ver. i. § 16. See also Bochart's Geog. Sac., lib. i. Berosus is said by Rollin to have lived in the third century before the Christian era, but this is probably not very certain. Josephus quotes other ancient writers, of whom Nicolaus Damascenus has the statement about the remains of the ark. It is also in Theoph. ad Autol., lib. iii. Berosus is quoted again in Joseph. c. Apion., i. c. xix. to the same effect. Eusebius adds a quotation on the flood from the Commentaries of Abydenus, which, he says, is from the Records of the Medes and Assyrians.

[2] Euseb., ib. cap. xiii. xiv.

the number and concurrence of these traditions entitle them to great weight upon the whole. They show that all the remains we have of the primitive history of mankind agree with the Mosaic accounts. There is nothing on the other side to support the modern theory; and they can be explained only by referring them to the same source of primitive truth with the inspired writings. That they have suffered in the transmission, and are often mingled with fable, is a testimony to the simplicity and consistency of the Bible. And the sacred volume itself, it must be observed, deserves the greatest weight as a historical record, independently of its authority from inspiration.

13. Other testimonies of profane history are still more indisputable than the European. Next after the Bible, the best and most authentic accounts of the primitive condition of the race are to be found in the literature of India. The Indians are, to this day, the keepers of their own records, and of their sacred books, the Vedas, and have preserved them with the utmost jealousy. Modern researches have established that this most ancient literature of the world inculcates a pure doctrine of the Supreme Being, and testifies to the degeneracy of the human race. This last is the essential doctrine of the system of Emanation, and distinguishes it from pantheism, with which it has been mistakingly confounded. It is, in fact, the very antithesis of pantheism. Pantheism makes all things one with God, and destroys the distinction of right and wrong. The Emanation doctrine confesses the separation of created beings from the Creator, and finds in it the root of evil, as reunion with God is the highest destiny of the virtuous.[1]

A system of this kind is to be found in the laws of Menù, which are of the very highest antiquity. They testify, in language of

[1] Omitting atheism, which is rather folly than philosophy, may not every philosophy of existence which is not pantheistic be considered one of Emanation? In Pantheism the creature may be one, either in essence, or, as in all fatalism, only in operation with the Creator. Emanation may also be either from the Divine Essence or from the Divine Agency. In Christian Theism the creature proceeds not from the Essence but from the Agency of the Creator; but the spiritual life of the soul consists in communion with the Eternal Spirit.

the deepest melancholy, to the constant degradation of what is expressed, in a line of Menù's, as—"This fearful world of existence, which sinks ever deeper and deeper in ruin and destruction"—a line which reveals, as Frederic von Schlegel informs us, "the predominant feeling, the ruling spirit of the entire system."[1] Humboldt also mentions "a belief deeply rooted in the earliest Indian doctrine of Krishna—'Truth was originally deposited with men, but gradually slumbered and was forgotten.'"[2] He notices in the same place the evidences in the structure of languages, recently still farther developed, that the savage tribes of mankind have lapsed from a civilization which was early lost.

"Some," we have been told, "have been so perverse as to place monotheism farthest back;" and "such inversions" are said to be "inconsistent with facts." Schlegel gives us the facts in the first place, from which he concludes that, "notwithstanding the rude errors and arbitrary fictions with which their philosophy is every where overlaid . . . . still it can not be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the True God; all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions, noble, clear, and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverentially expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God."

The same writer, in his "Philosophy of History," points out similar confirmations of the Mosaic Records to be found in the independent literature of the Chinese; some of which was ancient in the time of Confucius, in the sixth century before Christ, and probably goes back to within a very few generations of the flood.

14. We may now direct attention to some of Mr. Parker's observations on the arbitrary theory which he supports. He tells us that in the worship of nature visible objects have generally been regarded as "types of the Infinite Spirit,"[3] that "even the most savage nations regarded their idols only as types of God." As this opinion seems to fall in with the truth that the primitive religion was monotheism, he attempts to reconcile it with his own

[1] On the Indian Language, Literature, and Philosophy, Book ii., chap. ii.
[2] Cosmos, vol. ii. p. 113.
[3] Discourse, p. 30.

theory, by holding that the religious sentiment would lead man to the One God, "if the conditions of its action were perfectly fulfilled. But as this is not done in a state of ignorance and barbarism, therefore the religious sentiment mistakes its object, and sometimes worships the symbol more than the Spirit it stands for."

Again, he states the question to be—"Did the human race set out from civilization and the true worship of one God, or from cannibalism and the deification of nature?" and decides for the latter hypothesis. He then accounts for the traces of Monotheism to be found in all the lower stages of religion. "This must necessarily follow from the identity of the human race. If man is the same in all ages, and this sentiment is natural to him, then we must expect to find such expressions of it in the poets and philosophers—in the religion of India, Greece, and Rome. Men of the same spiritual elevation see every where the same spiritual truth."[1]

We read again, in his first sermon on "the Popular Theology," "From the beginning of the human history, there has been a progressive development of all the higher faculties of man;"[2] and again—"The leading nations of the Caucasian race have, thus far, outgrown, first the savage's rude fetichistic worship; then classic heathenism; then patriarchal deism; then the Mosaic worship of Jehovah; and now the most enlightened portion thereof have come to what is called Christianity. Shall we stop with the present form of religion called Christianity? Mankind never surrenders to time. There is a progress in what is called Christianity."[3]

Yet, notwithstanding all this, he tells us elsewhere, that "perhaps no form of religion has yet been adopted which has not the stain of fetichism upon it. The popular Christian Theology is full of it."[4]

A writer may easily fall into minor inconsistencies without prejudice of his main design, and it is never worth while to search for them. But here is a fundamental and vital question, on which the whole difference turns, between Christian Theism and the

[1] Discourse, p. 68, 71. [2] Theism, etc., p. 51. [3] Ib. p. 53.
[4] Discourse, p. 34.

Theism of Mr. Parker: here is a point on which depend the questions—Did God create man in His own image, or did He call to being a horde of savages? Is evil the work of God in man, or the work of man in himself through an independent will? Is the race capable of development in mind, morals, and religion through the natural faculties, or does it stand in need of supernatural aid? Does the history of the past furnish us with that evidence of human progress, *independent of the supernatural assistance of the Hebrew and Christian religions*, which can justify the arrogance of modern Deism, and the blasphemous invective of Mr. Parker against the God of the Holy Scriptures?

His justification depends upon this question, and it is therefore one upon which it behooved him to be especially precise, explicit, and consistent. How far he has answered such an expectation, will appear to those who can answer the questions—how, if man be "the same in all ages," there can have been "a progressive development of all the higher faculties of man:" whether the existence, at all times, of "men of the same spiritual elevation" can be reconciled with a state of human progression from savage cannibalism: whether to worship natural objects and idols *as types of God*, and the nature-worship of the early Indians, penetrated, as it was, with the knowledge of the One True God, be identical with the savage nature-worship and fetichism of America and Africa: how it can be true that the sentiment and idea of God must express themselves spontaneously, and yet not express themselves unless the conditions of their action be perfectly fulfilled, which "in a state of ignorance and barbarism is not done:" how, in short, there can have been such a wondrous progression in religion from the rude fetich worship of the savage, through five or six distinct stages, to the Christianity of the present day, and the advanced Theism of Mr. Parker's "Church," yet Christianity be full of fetichism, and the earliest records of religion that we possess contain unquestionable evidence that, at the beginning of this progression, the Indian Theism was as pure and elevated as our own.

When these apparent inconsistencies shall have been explained, we shall still want evidence of facts for the development scheme:

meanwhile, they can only be regarded as the inconsistencies into which a writer must fall who attempts to square the facts of history with a false and arbitrary assumption. The truth is, there are two schools in Mr. Parker, which are, unfortunately, inconsistent with one another—the school of Des Cartes, and the school of "the Positive Philosophy." The foundation of his theism is laid in the religious nature of man, which implies the existence of the Supreme Being. This fundamental idea of his system makes it, from the first, inconsistent with development. The idea and conception of God are the highest which humanity has attained, or can attain; and, according to Mr. Parker, they have been attained by men of the same spiritual elevation in every age. There is little room here for progression. "The Positive Philosophy" *has* a progression, or, as some may perversely call it, a regression; for the course of it is to get rid of this idea of God, as a delusion of the "infantine theological state."

We have endeavored to estimate the argument from the idea of God in human nature. It conveys truth to the ignorant, but can not give scientific knowledge till it has been established on general principles. And a searching investigation was requisite before Mr. Parker should have drawn from naked conceptions his sweeping conclusions against the popular theology. We may use an illustration of his own. Des Cartes and Comte are the Jachin and the Boaz of his Theology. Kant long since taught us the value of Cartesianism, and his Critique strikes down "the first column" of this system. Mr. Parker's Theism "swings in the air at one end." The "laws and facts of human history" to which we have been referred "strike away the other column," and the system "swings in the air at the other end. It lacks a philosophical basis and a historical superstructure, false in its idea, and false also in its historic fact." The idea can not judge of Infinite Perfections: historic facts are against the theory. History, too, fully confirms the truth of experience, that the common course of human nature, when left to itself, is not to develop, but to currupt; not to meliorate the works of God, but to mar them. In the history of the world, as in that of every soul of man, it needs the aid of One Superior to itself.

15. An observation must be added on the modern attempts to classify the different forms of religion under the heads of Fetichism, Polytheism, and Monotheism. Schlegel notices the unsatisfactory nature of such classifications, and points out the necessity of ascertaining not only "what were the objects of Divine worship, but what were the views, intentions, and doctrines connected with it."

A distinction of this kind has been already indicated in the chapter on pantheism. Some systems, it was observed, hold the doctrine of One Infinite God, the Source of Being, but are pantheistic rather in regarding the finite as inseparable from the Essence of the Infinite, than as constituting that Essence. In other systems the Infinite is nothing else than the arithmetical sum or totality of all finite existences; or, in some systems, but an intellectual nonentity of the mind's conception.

Similarly, nothing can be more important than to distinguish that nature-worship which deifies all created things as emanations from the Uncreate, and that fetichism, to which alone the name belongs, which lost all notion of creation or of a Supreme Being. The one is the first stage of degradation. It shows us man deeply sensible of his original, but with a melancholy feeling of degeneracy—conscious of Evil, yet refusing to believe that he is no longer Divine, and that the Spirit of the Highest no longer dwells with him as it did; still skeptical of the sentence, "Thou shalt surely die." The other and true fetichism is the last and most degraded condition of man—dead in intellect, dead in conscience—dead, not only as no longer in Divine communion, but in the very faculties which give him the conception of Divinity. It would seem as if the general conscience of mankind, like that of an individual, felt most keenly in the earliest stage of decline.

A similar remark applies to polytheism. All image-worship is, in Scripture, idolatrous, even though the image be considered a type of God. But here also there are degrees of sinfulness and degeneracy. The systems of classic heathendom, which retained notions of the True God, are widely different from the savage worship of devils—that religion of unmixed fear, which had forgotten the Author of all good, and sought, by horrible sacrifices, to pro-

pitiate the imaginary authors of evil. It is the difference between the worship of Brahma and that of Siva, which are far apart, though they be coexistent. Such systems are no more to be identified, because both fall under the name of polytheism, than the former, because modern system makers have chosen to class them all under the head of fetichism.

To overlook these distinctions in the classification of religions is much the same thing as to construct a natural history by classifying animals according to their magnitude, without taking account of any differences which subsist among them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIVINE WISDOM AND GOODNESS IN THE REVELATIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. Pride of the Development Theory.—2. Salvation an Eternal Purpose.—3. The unchanging Law.—4. Forms of Human Sinfulness.—5. Idolatry. Its Origin.—6. Traditions concerning Idolatry.—7. Early Revelations.—8. Double Purpose of the Old Testament.—9. The Chosen People.—10. The Nations of Canaan.—11. Divine Goodness under the Old Testament.—12. Extent of Human Degeneracy.

1. The difference between Christianity and the development theory may be briefly stated. This charges evil upon the Creator, and gives to man the credit of all goodness. The other declares all good to be of God, all evil to be of the creature. If sin be the necessary result of human imperfection, man can not be responsible for it; yet he will still pride himself on his advancement in the strength of self. The Positive Philosophy instructs us to "admit a collective pride in that human progressiveness which has brought us into our present state."[1] Every thing great and good in human nature may thus be claimed as the work of man, and nothing but a chaos of disorder is attributed to the agency of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness. The opposite view is more reasonable, and more consistent with theism—"If thou hast received it, why dost thou glory?" It may deserve consideration, whether the permanence of benevolent Design in the frame and constitution

[1] Vol. ii., p. 186.

of things, while evil is always a disorder or perversion of natural powers, be not an evidence additional to those of the preceding chapter, that all evil is the work of the finite and mutable, all good of the Immutable and Eternal.

2. The Holy Scriptures affirm that the work of God in creation was perfect, and has been corrupted by the work of man. Man, once fallen, can not recover himself, nor rise, in the course of ages, from a lower to a higher condition. By himself, his tendency has been to degenerate. This truth of Scripture is confirmed by history, wherever the course of history can be viewed apart from the influences of revelation.

The Love of God had determined in eternal counsels to bring salvation to the fallen. His Wisdom appointed the Plan of Salvation, and the manner of its introduction and discovery to the world. It was no afterthought, but an eternal purpose. The dispensations of the Old Testament prepared the world for its introduction; and its records make known to us the condition of the race before the Christian era, and the mode in which Divine Holiness has striven with the sinfulness of the human will.

As in the first creation the works of God were very good, so it is the Divine Purpose, in all His dealings with men, to revive Goodness, and to establish it by a new creation. It was the sin of the finite will which wrought disorder in the universe, and broke the communion between God and man. The harmony of the universe is to be re-established by the renewal of Divine Life within the soul. The purpose of the Creator was steadfast, through long ages of material existence, before the creation of man. In the history of intelligent agents it can be no less sure and unchangeable. In the material formation of the world, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and a well-ordered world stood forth, from that which had been "without form and void." Such will be the issue of His strivings with man in this life of moral disorder.

3. The great Purpose of Revelation is that which runs through its whole course, and is manifest on every page. And what is this but to bring men from sin to holiness, from vice to virtue, *from the* strife of hell to the unity of heaven, from the love of self

to the love of God and man; and to accomplish this through the restoration of the fallen to communion with God in Jesus Christ? That such is the scope of revelation is manifest to every candid reader. LOVE TO GOD AND MAN is the Great Law of the Old Testament and of the New. This is the Law of a creation harmonious with the Creator: the Eternal Law of God. This is the Law of Order, which is set forth under every form of instruction—by example, by precept, by warning, by entreaty; by all the hopes of a happy immortality, and the motives of Divine Love. This is the Law which patriarchs exemplify, and the inspired Lawgiver enunciates, and prophets enforce, and wisdom utters in its proverbs, and psalmists celebrate and sing. This is the Law which Jesus preaches, by Himself and by His Apostles, which He perfectly fulfills on earth, and confirms to His beloved disciple in heavenly visions. This is the Law which is clothed in awful thunders at Sinai, and commended to us by the gentle words of Him, who does "not strive, nor cry, nor cause His Voice to be heard in the streets." "Glory to God, and peace on earth, and good will to men," is the angels' song at His birth, the desire and intention of his Life, the reward and portion of His Death. It is the Law from Genesis to Revelation; the same Law which the finger of God has written on the moral nature of man, which man is ever trying to evade, but has never been able to efface.

4. It is to be expected that the dealings of God with moral agents will be conformable to the nature which He has given them. Had He interposed to prevent sin, or to avert its consequences—if He had at once destroyed a sinful race, He might then have been chargeable with the variableness of which the enemies of Christianity now seek, but in vain, to accuse Him. His first Design included His purpose with reference to man, both before the fall and after it; and is fulfilled, whatever may be the event. It was His Eternal Will to meet the fall in a special manner, and to deal with the fallen according to a Plan of Infinite Wisdom.

To understand, as far as we may, the work of God in the world, we must always take account of the nature and condition of mankind.

We shall find, if we consider the history of the race, that the

love of self, which is so continually in antagonism to the Divine Law, though ever inclined to the same excesses, has assumed three principal forms or disguises in man's endeavor to conceal from himself his true character and condition. These forms are Idolatry, Pharisaism, and Atheism; and are equivalent to the worship of false gods, dissembling with the true God, and the denial of all gods.

5. Idolatry was the first disguise of sinfulness in early ages, and still abounds, wherever human selfishness exists in combination with the particular character of mind which can be deluded by it. The revelations of the Old Testament are, for the most part, directed against the idolatrous forms of human sinfulness.

The early prevalence of idolatry is no evidence that man's original condition was that of the savage. That the race was more disposed to this sin in remote than in more recent times, must be admitted. The love of false worship, scarcely restrained by the very Presence of Jehovah, is one of the most striking features of the Israelitish character before the captivity. It may be difficult to give a perfectly satisfactory account of this phase of human error. The most likely would appear to be, that the character of the race, like that of individuals, necessarily undergoes some change in the course of time and the progress of age. The increase of knowledge, the cultivation of arts and sciences, the development of the multifarious resources of life, and the numerous pursuits connected with them, will have similar effects on the general character of mankind as on that of individuals. Such pursuits have gone far toward the formation of our national character, so little predisposed to idolatrous practices.

It was otherwise in the first ages of the world. The patriarchal state, with its simple customs and manners, was the infancy of the race. The freshness of creation, as well as their manner of life, would naturally impress the mind with the magnificence of nature, and accustom it to that contemplation which would give a prominent energy to the imaginative faculties. Such a mental conformation, under the growth of wickedness, and in those who were afraid of the True Creator, would be favorable to the introduction of idolatry.

Some writers have conjectured that, in the early ages, there was a closer relation between man and the concealed forces of nature than has existed in later times. Modern Spiritualism, as it is called, may perhaps find a resemblance between the ancient worship of rude stones, or Bætyli, with its accompanying magic rites, and the pretended revelations, which have lately become so cheap. But the notion is discountenanced by Humboldt, the most competent judge of such a question. "Closer communication with these so-called children of nature discloses nothing of that superior knowledge of terrestrial forces which the love of the marvelous has sometimes chosen to ascribe to rude nations."[1] But, at all events, the high sense of the marvelous, the magnificent, the sublime, which must have belonged to the infancy of the race, would be likely to encourage the notion of spiritual communication, whether true or false; and, under the direction of interested impostors, would lead to that hero-worship and star-worship which were the earliest forms of idolatry.

Other circumstances in their early history would tend to develop the religious elements of humanity. The first members of the race had seen higher manifestations of the Divine presence than are displayed in nature. Men would be able, for many centuries, to converse with those who had walked with God. Atheism in such a condition was impossible. Pharisaical dissembling would be no less difficult. They could neither deny God, nor imagine Him, as dissemblers do, to be afar off. Yet, while sin continued and increased, they could not believe and worship Him, whose Word had proved so true in the consequences of sin. Idolatry, or false worship, would most easily quiet the fears of the guilty soul, while it deluded the religious nature with a counterfeit.

6. Testimonies, such as the case admits, are not wanting to show that idolatry was not the primitive religion of man, but was very early introduced. There is an ancient tradition that Sabæism was one of the first forms of idolatry. Like all human aberrations, it would not be introduced all at once, but by degrees, and, at first, in connection with true worship. The early adoration of the Bætyli need not have originated in that gross savage fetichism

[1] Cosmos, vol ii., p. 113, Sabine's translation.

which regarded them as Divine. It is more probably accounted for by the natural custom of setting up stones as memorials, and dedicating them to God with some particular ceremony, of which there are instances in the Bible.[1]

7. Profane History is not without its tradition, agreeing with Scripture that the Flood was a Divine retribution on the wickedness of mankind. Length of life and great physical strength would combine to heighten the impiety and confusion of the Antediluvian world. "The wickedness of man was great;" "the earth was filled with violence." But "preachers of righteousness" were not wanting, nor warnings of impending judgment unheard. From the earliest age, the purpose of God is made known. The finite will is influenced by motives of Divine Goodness and Judgment, but can not with impunity resist the Infinite. The worker of violence may bring destruction upon himself, but God will establish a kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The flood was a warning to future ages, but did not terminate the probation of man, nor accomplish the Divine purpose in the world. The Old Testament records those Dealings of God with human nature by which it has pleased Him both to educate the race and to save them from the ruin to which their own willfulness was tending; and so to advance His design in the Plan of Salvation.

8. In studying the several books of the Old Testament, it is important to keep in view that they all had two purposes to fulfill; one temporary and national, the other permanent and universal.

It is not necessary that we should know the reasons for the choice of one nation out of all, by which the whole race has been instructed. But when we know that such has been the Divine pleasure, it is probable that revelation will be addressed to them nationally, and its dispensations introduced under circumstances likely to bind them together as a people, and to separate them from other nations. This observation may explain passages of Scripture which, judged, as they sometimes are, without this reference, may appear to be "trifling," or "national," or "beneath the high region" to which the soul would soar. We must take account of the times and cir-

[1] Gen. xxviii. 18; xxxv. 14. Josh. iv. 8, 9, etc.

cumstances under which the various books were written, and the state of those to whom they were addressed. The intelligent and moral nature of mankind had sunk to a low condition previously to the commencement of the Jewish economy, and has been raised through the influences of revelation, and especially of Christianity. It may therefore be very unreasonable to complain that this or that passage of the book by which God has educated the race is beneath what we should expect.

Nor can any objection to the Divine Wisdom be founded on the national spirit of the Old Testament. Granted that the Law and the Prophets received a low and selfish interpretation from the Jews, and were viewed through a medium of "national prejudice and vanity;" yet this was their sin, according to Scripture itself, and became in the end their destruction. Granted that, in the fulfillment of God's purpose to make them a chosen people, their Scriptures are full of national events and national appeals; yet can it be otherwise if the human race is to be instructed by the history of One Nation, and by God's dealings with them? And there is in all these Scriptures a deeper meaning, too clear to be mistaken, and which it was at last their ruin to have overlooked. The Christian, at least, has no difficulty in understanding the passages which speak of glory and peace to Israel, but anticipates their fulfillment in the peace and glory of "the Israel of God."

9. Every reader of the Old Testament must have perceived that the supernatural interpositions of Divine Providence were constantly directed to the suppression of idolatry and the moral improvement of man, while they also anticipate a fuller and brighter revelation of light and power to be discovered in a future age.

According to the Scriptural account, the people from whom the patriarch Abraham was called, while they still possessed the knowledge of the True God, were gradually sinking into idolatry.[1] The early history of Abraham and his descendants is that of a people whom the Almighty had appointed to fulfill His Will, and who must therefore pass through those trying and stirring events which were sure to strengthen and improve their national character. Their sojourn in Egypt; their pollution with its idolatries; their

[1] Josh. xxiv. 2, &c.

fellowship in suffering; their marvelous deliverance with signs and wonders, and the predicted conquest of Canaan; and these too, with manifest judgments upon the idolatrous practices of those people;[1] the dispensation from Sinai; the perils of the wilderness; the destruction of the tribes of Canaan, who were sunk to the extremity of moral perdition—these were circumstances calculated to bind them together in strong bonds as the peculiar people of Jehovah, to convince them that the gods of the heathen were no gods, and that there is no God but the Lord. Their moral Law, so familiar to us, and, we are apt to think, so easily discovered by conscience, was truly a revealed law to them. There is an old tradition that, from the beginning of the world, a revelation of moral duties was given to man. But the great law of Love, though that of the patriarchal religion, and of every dispensation, was a new commandment to Israel when they came out of Egypt. Indeed, though old in the letter, it is still, after these thousands of years, a new commandment in practice. If it had gained a more general influence in the world, or even in the Church, mankind would not now be distracted as they are by the idolatry, the pharisaism, the atheism which abound.

The ceremonial law of the Jews, with its burdensome ceremonies, was full of emblems and symbols, which could not but remind them that something was intended beyond the meaning of the letter. Their history was a perpetual training in opposition to the propensities of heathenism. Their geographical position was well adapted for their mission as teachers of mankind. Their very character and estimation in the world, despised and detested as they were, is a proof to every succeeding age that a religion which emanated from them must have made its way by its own merits to gain to itself the philosophic Greek and the proud citizen of Rome. Their condition to this very day as a distinct people, after their long dispersion and their many vicissitudes, is a proof that God has not dealt with them as with other nations, but has had some special design in their history. They have exhibited to the world, during many ages, the fulfillment of two prophecies, which without them would have been thought con-

[1] Wisdom, xii. 27.

tradictory. They are "scattered among all nations," and yet they "dwell alone." (Num. xxiii. 9; Deut. xxviii. 64.)

An impugner of Christianity has said that "mankind stood in need of one to instruct them." Let him try to separate from the world's history all the influences which have flowed from Palestine, and he may find reason to confess that God has instructed mankind during ages past, and that systematically, by means of this nation. As their national Head, He often addressed them nationally, and in a manner calculated to excite a national spirit; but the event has proved that the chief purpose of the Almighty was to make them the instructors of the human race, and, through the house of David, to bring salvation to mankind.

10. The destruction of the nations of Canaan has been a common source of objection and difficulty. Modern writers often represent it as repugnant to the moral instincts of human nature. But, as regards the Divine Conduct in these events, it is not inconsistent, as it has often been answered, with eternal morality, that fire or sword, any more than earthquake or pestilence, should exterminate a people sunk in hopeless wickedness, and sold to enormities of vice and crime. The objection here brought against the Old Testament applies also to the revelation of Divine Judgments in the New, and will generally be found to go along with that false notion of the Divine Character which overlooks the Judgments of the Almighty as a moral Governor, and represents Him as a Being of pure Benevolence.

And with reference to the employment of human agents, it is difficult to discover any thing more chargeable with immorality in the extirpation of a people utterly base and corrupted than in the punishment of a malefactor by death. The difference between the cases is not one of right or wrong, but of man's competency and authority to be the judge. The community may judge the individual, and perhaps it would not, even in the present day, be held immoral for a congress of nations to decide whether the existence of a horde of incorrigible pirates or savages were compatible with the welfare of mankind. This then is, at all events, a point on which the Divine Command would decide without compromise of the moral law.

The frequent difficulties and objections upon this subject are, for the most part, of little weight or importance. On the contrary, the heavy Displeasure of God, in the severe punishment of the nations of Canaan, was an impressive lesson in the moral education of the Israelites. It was a solemn national warning of Divine Wrath upon the authors of confusion and mischief — a warning which could not be forgotten with impunity; but which it is now convenient to call immoral, because it might otherwise afford presumption of a righteous judgment to come.

11. The manifestations of Divine Love to the chosen people are manifest throughout the Old Testament. As the affections of the heart are a natural evidence of the Character of the Creator, so the Great law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," implies the promise of God's Love to man. It is manifested in all His dealings with Israel, in His Long-suffering, His many mercies, the touching appeals addressed to them; and in all the instances of His regard, summed up in the question of the prophet—"What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" But the Divine Goodness always looked beyond the immediate events. It is the truth of Scripture, what may be confirmed by reason and experience, that the whole human family has been instructed and elevated by these supernatural aids. Without the early and frequent interpositions of Heaven, partly in the means of external instruction, partly in that Unseen Presence of God with man which is the fruit of Universal Redemption, there would have been no relief to the deep and plaintive sorrow of the first years of degeneracy, no recovery from utter ruin in the subsequent stages of perverse wickedness. The early age would have sunk in distraction and despair, unless God had given hope to the fallen. Later ages would have realized that worst curse which can happen to man—"He is joined to idols, let him alone;" and the world would never have heard of a natural development of progress.

12. The history of the race, so far as it can be understood, bears testimony to the truth of Scripture, that all good is of God, and that man, without God, ever increases in the miserable fruits

of evil. The perverted affections, the conscience smothered to extinction, the darkened understanding, the heart past feeling, and —what to civilized man is the last worst stage of all—the love of sin for its own sake—the state of those who not only practice abominations, but have pleasure in them that do them—these, and that yet deeper depth of human wretchedness—the savage state, in which reason as well as conscience has been lost, and only vile affections and animal force remain—are different stages of the degeneracy of man. To understand his real condition, considered in itself, without taking account of the remedial measures provided by Divine Goodness, it would be necessary to see with the eyes of God, when He looked down from Heaven and pronounced mankind to be "altogether abominable." He can behold the work of man without seeing it every where checked and restrained by His Own Work for man; He can see the effects of sinfulness, as they must be seen to be rightly estimated, not as they are diverted from their course by His Divine interference, and appear to advantage in the light which is none of their own, but as they would have been had there been "none to help," and man had been left to the fruits of his own ways.

It is a common truth that the germs of every vice are to be found in the heart. The same faculties are always capable of the same perversions. There is no deed so impious or so odious, but any man may be brought to it by a course of wickedness without restraint. Many have lived to perpetrate the deed and to glory in it, which was once too fearful to be thought of. Even the generous and virtuous qualities of the heart are retained through the mercy of God in Redemption. Without supernatural aid all the good powers of human nature must have been perverted to evil: the wicked dispositions must have broken into full play; vile and malignant passions would have overpowered resistance. The first chapter of Romans would have been no partial picture of mankind, and would have fallen short of the terrible reality. No race of beings could have continued long in the vile lusts of unredeemed man; none could have indulged the demoniac rage of fiends, unless gifted with their immortality. No flood nor fire of heaven had been needed. The earth had long since been a soli-

tude. Man had long since been his own destroyer; and none would have questioned the literal truth, that death was the immediate consequence of sin.

CHAPTER VIII.

REDEMPTION: THE GREAT MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE WISDOM, HOLINESS, AND LOVE.

1. Redemption and the Fall; correlative Doctrines.—2. Consequences of Sin unknown.—3. It changes Man's Relations to God.—4. Spiritual Life.—5. Man needs a Saviour.—6. The Doctrine is above Criticism.—7. Objections to this Doctrine.—8. Confirmations of the Doctrine. Conscience.—9. Custom of Sacrifice.—10. The Desire of all Nations.—11. Concurrent Prophecies.—12. Practical Efficacy of the Doctrine.

1. It is a common but mistaken outcry that the Christian doctrines are inconsistent with one another. But the impugners of Scripture appear to be aware of the consistency between the Fall of man and the Atonement for sin. It will be found that they uniformly go together, and are either both received or both rejected. If man commenced from a low imperfect condition by the appointment of the Creator, he must aim at the accomplishment of his destiny, whatever that may be, in the strength of his own powers and energies, and can no more need a Divine Saviour from evil than the material world would need the descent of a star from the firmament to direct it in the progressions of ages. But if he were created in the Divine Image, and possessed an original Divine life, which he has forfeited through sin, it is consistent that he can not renew this life through any effort of his own.

No part of the Christian system has furnished the occasion for objections so constant as that of the Atonement for sin. Like most other objections to Christianity, they apply to the Scriptural revelation of the Divine Character. It has not been left to the present age to find new difficulties or new defenses of this cardinal doctrine. But objections long since silenced, which have hidden themselves for a time, to come to light again with the freshness and the boldness of novelties, may safely be met with the weapons which have been successful before.

2. In answer to them, it was argued by Bishop Butler[1] that we can not possibly know what, in the nature of things, will be the consequences of sin; whether they follow as natural and necessary consequences, or as determined by the Necessary Attributes of God; and that we have no right to expect that any thing we could do would be sufficient to avert them. The argument admits of no answer. We have not that knowledge of the constitution of things which can justify objections to the Divine plans concerning us. We can not search the depths of the human constitution, and discover the connection between the will and the other powers of being. Nor can we understand the relation of these powers to the Self-existent Being. Beyond question the effects may be irremediable, except through a Renewed Energy from the Source of life, when once the will of the creature has been turned against the Will of the Creator. And we can not know how the evil may be averted, nor constitute ourselves judges of the Divine Conduct in the Plan of Salvation.

3. We may know, however, that our existence and well-being are dependent upon our moral relations to God, and that these relations are disturbed by our sinfulness. The relations between the creature and the Creator must, at first, depend upon the Character of the Creator. But when the life of the creature has continued, they depend also upon his own character. We have seen it to be an anticipation of reason, that the Most High and Holy will be the Author of a good creation, and will have complacency in the perfection of His works. His Divine Power is glorified when He sees all that He has made and pronounces it to be very good. His Holiness is that Eternal Attribute, in which rest the Eternal Laws of Universal Order, to which He requires His moral creatures to be conformed. To commit sin is to oppose the Holiness of God; but, since man can not comprehend the Divine Nature, it follows that revelation alone can inform him of the effects of sin upon the moral relations between himself and his Creator. The Scriptures continually speak of *the Wrath of God*, and regard all sin as an offense to Him. "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" as though He turned away from it, as man will turn from what is

[1] Analogy, part ii. chap. vi.

odious. Whatever be the full meaning of this language, in its application to the Divine Nature, it is manifest that it expresses some change in the relation between God and man, which the sinner can not expect to obviate by his own efforts.

4. But there is a constant doctrine of Scripture, and it is a probable truth of natural religion, which makes it still more evident that we are incompetent judges of the Divine Conduct in the plan of salvation. This doctrine is that of the Real Spiritual Communion between the Creator and His sinless or reconciled creatures. What is life? what are the relations in being between Creator and creature? are questions which man may ask, but can not answer. This, however, he may know, that life is something beyond his sphere of agency, and can not be prolonged by his word or will. He lives he knows not how; he is neither self-originated nor self-dependent; he can not dive down to the fountain of his being, nor tell so much as whether it lies wholly within himself, and distinct from all other creatures.[1] Life, in its full real meaning, which includes more than is discovered in sense or consciousness, is something he does not possess of his own. Every power is derived, every faculty is conferred by God; and it is quite consistent with reason that the perversion of the powers of life may alienate some of those powers, and change a man to the very depths of his being. To think otherwise is to imagine that the Creator has made us to be self-sufficient, and that we might dwell eternally alone. It is to regard Him as no longer the Sovereign of His creation.

If such a hypothesis be absurd, if He have created us to have some relations to Himself and to other created beings, it must follow that Scripture is in every way consistent with reason in its doctrine, that the full spiritual life can belong to those only whose wills are in harmony with the Will of God. It is as probable as it is Scriptural, if it be not even self-evident, that the life of the creature, in all its powers and energies, secret and manifest, must

[1] The argument is at least as old as Athanasius. Πῶς τολμῶσιν οἱ δυσσεβεῖς φλυαρεῖν ἃ μὴ θέμις, ἄνθρωποι ὄντες, καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς οὐχ εὑρίσκοντες διηγήσασθαι; τί δὲ λέγω τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς; τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἡμῖν εἰπάτωσαν, εἰ ἄρα εὑρεῖν δυνήσονται τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἐξιχνιάσαι φύσιν. (On Matt. xi. 27.)

be in some way dependent upon his use of those independent faculties which he has received from the Creator. How, then, can reason object to the Scriptural doctrines of spiritual death, and the renewal of Divine life by Jesus Christ?

We have, in fact, as good reason to believe that our deep relations of being to God must be changed by opposition to His Law, as that we possess any distinctness of being. Human reason has been prone to think that the Great Source of life must ever be the spring of all power, and that the streams of finite life, though they may seem to be cut off, yet flow on equably and unbroken. Free-will, with its facts of evil, comes in to correct the speculation, and discovers that the finite are not mere energies of the Infinite; but this evidence of our distinctness of being from God does not apply, in its full extent, to those who are at one with God in their conduct.

Such probable arguments of natural reason are consistent, as far as they go, with the fundamental truth of Scripture, that "the *wages* of sin is death, but the *gift* of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

5. For it follows, from the doctrine of spiritual death, that man can neither recover life by his own power nor know by what means it can be restored to him. He can not even think it unreasonable that resistance of the Infinite must be the death of all energy to the finite. Enmity to God must be something fearful; and, if reason alone must be the guide, we may as easily conjecture that it must be without remedy, as that it can at once be remedied by any human effort. Perhaps we should not be far wrong if, from the existence, in a state of trial, of a race universally sinful, we were to infer that there has been a Divine interposition for its rescue; but, at all events, it can not be ascertained by any means that a change of conduct will undo all the effects of the past. Man can have no more right to expect that the soul's life can be renewed when it has been lost, than that he can restore health or life to the body after he has destroyed it by dissolute courses, or by his willful act. Reason concurs with Scripture, that he may break the harmony of the Divine creation, but can not renew it; that he may wander from God at his will, but can not return when he may please, and needs supernatural aid for the

restoration of his spiritual life, no less than for the commencement of existence, or to call back a Lazarus from the grave.[1]

6. Objections to the doctrine of Redemption generally rest on false views of the competency of man's moral judgment. On such a subject the Divine Conduct can not be within the reach of human criticism. The important principle was clearly stated by Bishop Butler. "Not only the reason of the thing, but the whole analogy of nature should teach us not to expect to have the like information concerning the Divine Conduct as concerning our own duty."[2] We can not sufficiently know those principles of eternal morality, which have their foundation in the Divine Nature, to be able to apply them in judgment of His dealings with a fallen world. We have not acquaintance with universal nature to perceive the effects of the fall, or to pronounce what will be the agency of Infinite Holiness and Love to the fallen. Human reason, or human morality, is quite inapplicable to the questions. They may well involve "things into which angels desire to look." The Work of Redemption is as far beyond us as that of creation. Creation is the beginning of life: Redemption its renewal. Creation is the sending forth of a mysterious energy from the Infinite, which gives being to a world of harmony and order; redemption averts the consequences of evil, and restores the broken harmony of a fallen world by a renewed Energy of Divine Life.

7. Objections to this vital doctrine, similar to those of several writers of the day, are thus stated by Mr. James Martineau: "That He should select for His condition of salvation a doctrine which is not only unsupportable by any analogy of nature, but absolutely contradicted by all; which is metaphysically absurd, for guilt and innocence are no more transferable than intellect and eyesight; which is morally absurd, for its represents Christ as crucified under remorse for the sins of men which He never committed, and of which, therefore, He had neither memory nor consciousness; which denies the moral excellence of God, for it represents Him as conferring boundless blessedness on the wicked,

[1] So Athanasius has, de Incarn. c. x.: Οὐκ ἄλλου ἦν ἀπὸ τῆς γενομένης φθορᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀνενεγκεῖν, ἢ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου τοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν πεποιηκότος αὐτούς.

[2] Analogy, part ii. chap. v.

and venting the tempest of infinite vengeance on spotless innocence . . . may be admitted when language ceases to have meaning, and reason abdicates its seat."[1]

On this passage it may be observed: First, it was shown by Bishop Butler that the doctrine is supported by analogies of nature; and it may suffice to refer to his chapter upon this topic.[2] Secondly, the Christian doctrine is very unfairly stated in these remarks. Holy Scripture speaks of a transference of suffering, and teaches that the Sufferings and Death of Christ brought salvation to mankind; but this is something very different from a transference of guilt and innocence; and can neither be shown to imply it, nor deduced together with it from the Bible. No intelligent Christian can understand the doctrine of the atonement to imply a transference of guilt and innocence, or that Christ "was crucified under remorse for the sins of men." Still farther is the doctrine misstated, when it is said to represent God as conferring "boundless blessedness on the wicked." To be at one with God, is to be at one with Eternal Holiness. The whole tenor of Scripture, from first to last, confirms the distinct and positive statements of many passages, that the purpose of Christ's Death was to deliver the wicked "from the power of sin and Satan," and to make them "zealous of good works." And when it is said that vengeance has fallen upon Innocence, it must be remembered that the Lamb of God is Himself One with the Father, and is also the voluntary Propitiation for our sins. Like the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the deliverance of the Son to death is beyond the finite understanding, since it necessarily depends upon the Eternal relations of the Divine Persons, and on that Unsearchable Love of which the Son has spoken—"Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

But farther. Has not the writer carried the judgment of man evidently beyond its province? For surely it can not presume to trace back the Divine Conduct to the Divine Nature, nor to see how it is compatible with Infinite Perfections. Mr. Parker has a just observation upon this point: would that he had acted as he professes. "I shall not undertake to discuss the psychology and

[1] Rationale, p. 83.

[2] Analogy, part ii. chap. v.

metaphysics of God. The metaphysics of man are quite hard enough for me to grapple with and understand." He might have added, the morality of God and man. That which falls within the human sphere is quite hard enough for us. It is often very difficult for the most upright to steer his way through the dangers and deceits of life. It may take all his thoughts and all his attention to know what is right in many cases of conduct, and to perceive the course of the Divine Order. It may well exceed the highest intelligence to judge the morality of the Divine procedure in its application of Eternal Laws to a fallen world. That Divine Agency which renews the harmony of creation is consistent with Eternal Holiness; but can man know how it is to be renewed? That Work of God is good which removes the blight of evil from the moral and essential relations of God and man; but can man know how it is to be removed? That Interference of the Creator in the life of man is merciful and righteous which restores spiritual life to the dead in sins; but can man know how it is to be restored? He must first have searched both the depths of his own nature and the Eternal Attributes of the Creator. Here, as often, the words of Wisdom are full of truth; "Hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labor do we find the things; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out: and Thy Counsel who hath known?"[1]

8. The Divine Conduct in the Redemption of the world is thus wholly beyond the criticism of reason. The revelation of the Divine Perfections in Scripture, and especially in the doctrines of Christianity, is consistent with the inferences of natural theology. The Christian's God is therefore both the God of nature and the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. It scarcely falls within our subject to examine the direct evidences which confirm the doctrine of the Atonement. But its importance may justify a short notice of some of them.

The doctrine is supported by the testimony of Conscience. The soul is naturally borne down with remorse and fear under the sense of sin, unless it can know that sin has been put away. It often feels that there is something in sin which God alone can

[1] Wisdom, ix. 16.

undo, and is naturally afraid of coming into His Presence before it has been forgiven. Under this anxiety, it is little disposed to sit in judgment on the method of deliverance. It may find indications also in the powers and capacities, as well as in the remorse of conscience, that supernatural aid is needed for its perfection. Nothing is more remarkable in human nature, nor of more constant experience, than its combination of strength with weakness, of noble faculties and aspirations with low desires and debasing slothfulness. Man learns in the experience of life that he can not, in his own strength, work out the destiny which is set before him in his own moral constitution. He needs that aid and encouragement from One Mighty to save which the Gospel professes to afford. How entirely it meets his wants, and directs his energies, and moves him with influences which he can feel to be Divine, is a conviction of the Christian life, founded on the Great Work of Christ for man; and affords an evidence, of which the force can not be exhibited in any argument.

9. The universal prevalence of the custom of sacrifice has often been alleged in confirmation of this doctrine. Holy Scripture gives the only probable account of it. The atheist may think he sets aside its testimony by calling it "the old barbarous idea of satisfaction by death."[1] He denies the truthfulness of man's religious nature, and is not bound by any laws of reason. To call it a great illusion, or a natural madness, is an easy way of disposing of every fact of consciousness or of history which may be found to be inconvenient. But the theist who sees the truth must lie beneath all the monstrous systems of Pagan theology, can not consistently refuse to inquire whether there is any thing in human nature which would be likely to give rise to such a custom. Mr. Martineau has just assured us of the contrary, and with truth. The transfer of punishment is not a natural, nor a probable idea of the human mind. The custom can not then have originated with human nature. It must have come to man from without. Revelation assures us that it did. Its account is reasonable and agrees with facts. The notion of expiation could never have gained currency in the world if development had been the true

[1] Christianity and Secularism, p. 134.

theory of human history. But if sacrifice were a positive institution of the Creator in the first age, the dreadful customs of false religions—the offering of children to Moloch, the human hecatombs offered, with shocking atrocity, to the fiend of the Mexicans, become intelligible as its abuse by a debased and degenerate people.

10. The general expectation of mankind, before the Christian era, that a Teacher and Deliverer was to be revealed from heaven, is another confirmation of the Christian doctrine. There are passages to this effect in Virgil and Tacitus which are sufficiently remarkable to excite a feeling of the supernatural. But evidences of the Desire of all nations are drawn from remote periods and from people far separated from one another. "The Persian legislator predicts the appearance of a personage who should establish a religion pure and immutable, to whom kings should be obedient, and under his empire peace should prevail and discord cease. Confucius attests the same event, and proclaims that 'in the West the Holy One shall arise.' The followers of Brahma put into the mouth of their incarnate God the remarkable declaration, 'I am the sacrifice, I am the victim.' The middle divinity of the Gothic mythology is represented as obtaining a victory over death and sin, but at the expense of his own life."[1]

11. But the chief evidence of the doctrine is, of course, to be derived from the Scriptures. One of the many proofs that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God, is to be found in the concurrent prophecies of the Old Testament, which look to a future Guide and Saviour of mankind. He is foretold as the Blessing of all nations to Abraham; the Shiloh of Jacob; the Prophet like unto Moses at Sinai; the True Paschal Lamb; the Star of Balaam; the Lord our Righteousness in Jeremiah; the One Shepherd David of Ezekiel; Daniel's Son of Man, and Most Holy, and Messiah; the Ruler of Micah; the Glory of the latter temple in Haggai; the Branch of Zechariah; the Lord of the messenger and the Sun of Righteousness in Malachi; in Isaiah, the Immanuel, the Mighty God, the Branch from the Root of Jesse, the Man of Sorrows, who hath done no violence, neither was deceit found in His mouth, yet bears the iniquity of others,

[1] Carwithen's Bampton's Lectures, 1813.

and pours out His Soul unto death, and makes intercession for the transgressors.[1]

12. The great doctrine of the Christian system, the Atonement for sin by the Humiliation and Passion of the Son of God, is constantly set forth in Scripture, and has always been regarded by Christians as the chief manifestation to created beings of the Holiness and Love of the Most High. It answered long-felt anticipations and wants of mankind, as well as the desires of prophets and righteous men, who pondered the Divine purpose afar off, in the mysterious intimations of early prophecies. It has now, for two thousand years, been the corner-stone of a system, often misrepresented by enemies, often misunderstood by friends, and perverted to mischief—as what may not?—by wicked and designing men, but which has taught and teaches many who are never heard of beyond their humble but peaceful sphere of life, to live as if every action were of infinite consequence; and to die, as if life on earth were but the childhood of a life eternal.

And this, after all, is the test of its power. The Religion of Jesus has had a mighty influence in the world. It has awakened the intellect of nations, it has lent inspiration to genius, and kindled the enthusiasm of poetry and art. It has stirred the benevolence of the philanthropist, and has given heroic endurance to the martyr, and ennobling principles of action to men famous in their generation. These are a portion of its fruits. But awakened intellect has often been wielded by depravity, and the sacred powers of genius and art have pandered to the tyrant and the profligate. The grossest delusions have had their martyrs, and atheists have deserved honor for their humanity. The growth of civilization is one fruit of Christianity, but it has had an influence exclusively its own. It has made men virtuous in humble life, and patient and loving in obscurity—virtuous, and patient, and loving, not merely on the impulses of transient feelings, but on the goodness of habitual principle—not merely through a natural good heart, but by the conquest of a bad one. It has given good feeling to the rude, and intelligence to the unlearned, and directed the feel-

[1] The Old Testament prophecies are quoted in this manner by Justin M. Trypho, cap. 126.

ings and intelligence to objects worthy of man, because higher than himself. It has made many poor and unknown to be pure as true priests, and honorable as kings, for it has made them kings and priests to the Most High. It has imparted, through many a life of trial, that joy and peace which flow from God within the soul; till the spirit was breathed out to Him who gave it, in the assurance, as well founded as any that man can have, that to depart hence was to realize perfectly in heaven the love, joy, peace, which had already been attained upon earth.

They who have experienced its power are not perplexed that they can not solve all the questions which may be asked upon the Counsels of the Eternal. Why God could not pardon sin without an Atonement; how the suffering of the Just for the unjust can bring us to God; these are not questions for man to answer or to ask. Why demand an explanation of His Work in Redemption any more than of His Work in Creation? When man shall have comprehended the life of the body; how the constituent elements take counsel together for the formation of the marvelous human frame; how the vital cells become possessed of their wonderful properties; and whence it is that the living soul becomes the inhabitant of clay, he may then begin to search how it is that the death of the Redeemer was necessary for renewing the spiritual life of a fallen race. When man shall have embraced within the little circle of his knowledge the Eternal Laws of the Universal Order; when he shall have fathomed the deep sky with its million suns, or the deeper depth of his own soul; or, rather, when he shall have comprehended the whole nature of the Infinite, he will be warranted in affirming that this or that mode of agency is more consistent with Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, and may expect to reconcile the laws of the Divine Conduct with those laws of human morality, subordinate, yet also Divine, which are to regulate his conduct in his own proper sphere.

It is but the wayward ignorance of a willful child, when a creature of yesterday at one moment declares it "presumptuous to look through nature up to nature's God," and is content to stand, "with wistful and unsatisfactory curiosity, on the shores of eternity," professing, "in the profound sense of his own littleness, to

check the dogmatic spirit," and presently can affirm dogmatically that "the atonement by the Death of Christ is unsatisfactory as a scheme." It is to say that the view of nature and of man can not discover that the Infinite is a Spirit of Life, yet must unfold all the Mysteries of Infinite Being. It is to be blind to the things that are upon earth, dogmatic upon the things that are in heaven.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ supplies the defects of natural religion, and meets the wants of human nature. It both conquers the sense of guilt, and carries with it an inspiring power of well-doing. And this, in Scripture, is the proof that Christianity is possessed, and is the touchstone of its genuineness. To separate pardon and peace from the power of holiness, is to substitute for the true religion of Jesus an odious counterfeit, to fall from Christianity to that Pharisaism which includes some of the most destructive delusions of false religion. "All unrighteousness is sin." All immorality is sin. Sin brought death into the world. The Son of God destroys death by destroying sin. He does not "comfort where He ought not." He does not "confer blessedness on the wicked." He brings men "from darkness to light, from the power of sin and Satan unto God." He has descended from heaven, and has lived and died as a man, that men may "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and may "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

The Mystery of Godliness is the very assurance of its truth, the foundation of its hopes. A God altogether within our knowledge could not give happiness that passeth knowledge. In such a Being there could be no depth of Wisdom or Goodness, nothing but what must soon be exhausted, nothing suitable to beings immortal and progressive. Beneath the surface of things visible, both thought and feeling stretch to depths infinite and unknown. But all things are in Him, who is both "God and Saviour." "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." Of that fullness His saints "receive, and grace for grace."

CHAPTER IX.

THE FINAL CONSEQUENCES OF EVIL, CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE DIVINE PERFECTIONS.

1. Comparison of temporal and eternal Evil.—2. May Sin be eternal?—3. Present Judgment upon Sin.—4. Future Judgment.—5. The Soul changed by Depravity.—6. Opportunity of Moral Improvement.—7. Not to be expected hereafter.—8. Consistency of Divine Purposes.—9. Universalism. Mr. Martineau.—10. Bearing of the Doctrine on the Divine Perfections.—11. Future Suffering of the Depraved.—12. Objections. Mr. Newman's Opinions.—13. Mr. Parker's Opinions.—14. The Doom of Evil in Sacred Scripture.—15. Consistency of Doctrines.—16. Sin and Sorrow Correlative.

1. Common and plausible objections to the revelation of the Moral Attributes of God are derived from the Scriptural doctrine of the eternal consequences of sin. It is sometimes discussed as freely, and decided as confidently, as if it were the plainest and simplest of all subjects. And yet it may be expected to be of all the most difficult. The existence of evil in the world is the great problem of religious philosophy; its future and ultimate results can not but present still more intricate questions.

Although the evidences of the Being of God are, in no degree, invalidated by the existence of evil, yet it must be admitted that the facts of evil are what reason, without experience, would not have anticipated from its conceptions of the Infinite Being. One who has always lived in happy circumstances, and has seen nothing of the ills of life, would perhaps expect that all the works of a Great and Good Creator must be in perfect order, and all the creatures as happy as himself. Suppose him then, at length, to move abroad, and to pass through the varied scenes of human life in the world. He must soon be thrown back to an examination of his principles. He has found nothing to justify the irrational course of atheism, which exaggerates the ills and woes of life, and concludes that there can be no God over all. The evidences of natural theology remain in all their force, to demonstrate the

Being of a Great Creative Spirit, and even to establish the truth of His Infinite Perfections. Yet there can be little doubt that the evils of human life are not what reason, unguided by experience, would have anticipated from conceptions of the Supreme Being.

In the question of the final consequences of evil the case is different. Here, as before, the notion of Infinite Power and Goodness may lead to the inference, that sin and suffering must have an end; but the reasoner can not be confronted with any eternal consequences, and required to take account of them as facts. Experience shows us the existence of evil in the world, but we can have no experience of its future, much less its eternal results. It would seem to follow then, that dogmatic confidence must be out of place on such a subject. The arguments of natural theology can be no more than probable: revelation alone can decide.

2. In considering *the probable conclusions* of reason and experience, the great question is not so much the permanence of suffering as that of sin. That continued depravity must carry with it continued wretchedness, is a certain, if it be not an identical truth. Can it be known, then, that all sin will ultimately give place to goodness; or is there an incorrigible sin? To examine the question on natural principles is to estimate recent criticisms of Revelation. It should be too momentous a question to be discussed in a cold, unfeeling spirit.

3. Experience discovers that sin and depravity have their immediate consequences. It is evident from the growth of habit, and the formation of the dispositions and character, that some change is wrought by the conduct in the unseen nature of the soul. It has been observed, at some length, that all knowledge, and all the faculties, can be traced to certain ultimate elements, of which no farther account can be given. In the commencement of self-conscious life, man finds himself possessed of certain faculties and principles of knowledge, adapted to the world in which he lives; but can not discover how they have been formed, nor how they act, nor trace them to an absolute commencement. Search as he may, there is always within the soul, or beneath it, some depth lying beyond the reach of reflection, in which origin-

ates the life of thought and feeling, and where the principles of knowledge have their foundation. This may account for the difficulty of ascertaining and defining first principles. Arguments often fail to reconcile differences of opinion, because men differ in fundamental principles of judgment, which may not have been ascertained, and which may lie beyond the reach of observation.

It must be in this depth of life that the moral conduct produces its unknown effects. How the change may be effected, and what may be its nature, is beyond our knowledge. But although we can not trace the connections of being and action—though we can not see how, or where, in the fountain of life, or the springs of conduct, the free agency of man flows in to originate, to modify, or to direct—yet it is certain that the effects of the conduct upon the soul extend beyond the reach of observation and consciousness.

There is something solemn—it may be said, with soberness, there is something awful in the thought. Men do evil from day to day, without feeling or fear of consequences. But God sleeps not. His laws are never obsolete nor inefficient, and are working out the fatal results of sin in those who are least sensible of their operation.

It may thus be said to be a truth of natural religion, that there is a present and immediate judgment within the soul upon every deed of man. The Judge is always sitting, and his decisions are those of Omniscience, and are executed in unerring laws of nature. The Author and Preserver of the stupendous material frame of things is the Preserver of the souls of all, and meets every contingency of spiritual life in laws which operate with the certainty and precision of the laws of visible nature. The decision may be heard in conscience, or may be drowned in a turbulent mind; but heard or not, it is executed in laws which meet every event of human conduct, and can not be changed by any act of man.

There is, therefore, but a partial resemblance between human and Divine Judgment. It can not be thought that every sin moves the Judge of the earth to a new act of vengeance, unexpected by Himself; or that retribution follows trangression by arbitrary appointment, as the punishment of a criminal is by arbitrary enactment of human law. The Divine Agency, wherever it can be

traced, is through laws of nature. Divine Law is not arbitrary, but rests on eternal reasons, and is executed through the very powers of being. God is no finite designer who must make some new effort, and be prepared with some new expedient, to meet each contingency which may arise. He sees "the end from the beginning," and provides for all things from the first. As His First Creative Fiat includes all the events of material causation, so the first communication of power to finite beings carries along with it the unerring and abiding agency by which He meets and recompenses their conduct. The happiness of well-doing, the misery of wrong-doing are as inseparable from the power of action, as, in all human agency, the motive is inseparable from the act of will. As the law is fixed, and every influence already acting, which draws the falling stone to the ground, so is the law fixed, and every influence in action, which brings retribution to the doer of evil.

4. It can not be assumed, however, that the laws of spiritual being, any more than those of visible nature, contain in themselves all the causal potencies of future being; or are executed, even in their ordinary course, without the Immediate Presence and Agency of the Creator. The Ways of the Infinite are ever beyond knowledge; the relation of the first creation to the continued Providence ever unsearchable. But it is credible that there may be extraordinary events in the spiritual as well as in the material world. Such an event, indeed, is the passage of the spirit from the human life. Like the occasional stars of astronomy, and the new species of geology, it is miraculous with reference to the common laws of nature; though all such events may be included in a higher nature of more comprehensive laws, which may, in fact, extend to the Universal Agency of the Creator Himself. It is equally credible that beyond death there is a Judgment, or an immediate manifestation of the Deity to His creatures. This truth of revelation is, in no sense, inconsistent with any laws of material or spiritual nature.

5. It is manifest, from the obvious laws of spiritual life, that man can not know the present injury of wickedness. It must, therefore, be much more difficult to ascertain its final consequences.

The Word of God, in Conscience and in Scripture, declares both loudly and distinctly that none can do evil with impunity; but natural religion can make no discovery of the manifestations of future judgment.

But although no man can know the effects of evil upon himself, in changing the qualities of his nature, yet in those effects of depravity, which are manifested in every immoral and vicious life, there is enough to indicate that sin *may* lead to endless mischief. We need not penetrate to the inmost nature of the soul to understand the common language of experience, that man is degraded or debased by wickedness. The hardened heart and the seared conscience are familiar words, and express too familiar truths. They are seldom the growth of early years, but are common states with the aged. To the end of life, the meanness, the knavery, the lust, the selfishness of the bad man, become more and more inveterate. So that, even if that could be thought true, which "the fool hath said in his heart," there is still something to be feared in the plain facts of life, and in the issue of laws which are before his eyes. For surely it can not be safe to be naturally sensitive to distinctions of right and wrong, to be capable of good feelings and high aspirations, yet to live in defiance of conscience; to be subject, through life, to low desires, and engrossed in sordid pursuits; to become more and more callous and indifferent, as life advances; and, at length, when the generous and benevolent affections have long been withered, moral principles uprooted, the lofty aspirations quelled and subdued; when the loving and good spirit, of which every man is capable, is already dead, then to pass hence, without thought or concern for a life of mischief past, without fear of its issues of the future, as if it were the end of man to perish in that earth above which he had never sought to raise himself.

6. The case becomes still more serious when human life is considered as preparatory to a life to come. We have already noticed some of the evidences that it is fitted to be a state of moral improvement, and, both in the nature of the soul and the outward constitution of things, points to something beyond itself. Otherwise it is a riddle without an answer, a vanity without relief. It

must, therefore, be with the fear of eternal failure, to pass from life without answering its ends. It should alarm even the atheist, to have misdirected his faculties and wasted his opportunities. It must be a fearful thing to one who thinks at all, to see that the years of this earthly existence have been spent to no worthy purpose; or, still worse, in debasing to the perishable flesh the faculties of the immortal spirit.

7. But it may be asked, May there not be another state of probation and moral improvement beyond the present? It is conceivable certainly; and, it is true, there is something awful in making eternity dependent upon time. But the obvious fact that the longer men live the more fixed and determined they become in their principles and habits, whether for good or ill, leaves little ground for the expectation that another life will be given them to effect what has been neglected in the present.

Indeed, if another state were allowed for their moral recovery and improvement, it would appear that they must be created anew to be capable of profiting by it. In this life they become hardened and reckless, till they are incapable of love or fear; and such as they are, they pass away. "Their works do follow them:" for that they have been influenced in character, and formed in spirit by their conduct in life; that they are not what they might have been, had their pursuits been different; that the changes produced in them by a life of change have all tended to debase them; these are truths too evident to be questioned. We can have no ground for the supposition, that another state of probation would undo the evil of this state misspent. They come here with the simplicity, the facility, the flexible nature of a child. They come unformed in mind and character, and life is spent in forming themselves to ill. As far as human nature can be known, nothing at last remains in them which is capable of improvement, or susceptible to holy or lovely motives. And thus they pass the gates of death, to meet, beyond life, with the Power who sent them hither.

8. It may also be questioned whether the expectation of a future life of probation for those who have failed in the present be consistent with that Immutability of Purpose which is shown in the laws of visible nature, and which we naturally attribute to

the Infinite Being. It is often attempted to bring the charge of inconsistency against the doctrines of revelation, especially that of the fall, as if it implied that the Divine Purpose had immediately been frustrated. But to suppose that man is placed in a state of probation, where he may live till his moral nature is defunct, and then expect to have the means in another life of redeeming the opportunities and fulfilling the purposes of the present, is much more like a charge of inconsistency in the Creator. It can not be for nothing that He has made us, and placed us in this changeable state. For what purpose then, but that we may be proved and perfected under the government of Divine Laws? If He have placed us here for a particular end, it may be expected that it is only here that we can fulfill that end. We can not know the conditions of a future life, but we know that the present is a state of trial, and that it either establishes the soul in goodness, or so enslaves it to evil that it appears to retain no faculty which can be directed to its improvement in any future state.

9. There would seem to be but little safety in the expectations of Universalism. It might be expected, says Mr. Martineau, "that a revelation from the Infinite Creator would appeal sparingly to fear; for this is the coarse argument of mere power, which, if it produces submission, excites alienation, and is ill-suited to the purposes of One who would win created minds to sympathy with Himself, who holds in His hands unlimited means of touching the springs of better affection, and capturing all souls by the power of veneration."

This opinion is open to the question—Why should we assume that the Almighty will draw all souls to Himself in a life to come, when it is evident that all are not drawn in the present life? If we were to acquiesce in the first anticipations of reason, we might expect that all souls would always be captured to sympathy with the Great Lord of all. But in this world, it is manifest that moral advancement is dependent on the finite will; and, whatever be the means by which God may touch the springs of better affection, it is certain that all souls are not captured and won. How, then, can we conclude that it will be otherwise in the life to come? We may know from reason and conscience that no creature can

suffer through arbitrary decrees of Omnipotence. And revelation establishes, that all is done which is possible to Infinite Power and Goodness to draw man to God. Yet many prefer "to eat of the fruit of their own ways." It is the Christian doctrine that they will suffer no arbitrary condemnation, but the necessary consequences of their own willfulness; that they will be self-condemned, and will confess the Justice of the Judge.

10. We come, then, to the important question—Are eternal sin and suffering compatible with the Infinite Goodness of the Creator? or can they be assumed to be imcompatible? No more can be known upon such a subject than that the same reasons which are applicable to the strife and confusion of time apply equally to the question of eternal strife. If finite evil may exist in the creation of Infinite Power and Goodness, we can discover no impossibility in eternal evil, nor assume that the one is more consistent with the Divine Perfections than the other. The Deity is infinitely greater than all duration, as He is infinitely greater than time. Continuance without cessation is always but finite duration, compared with the Absolute Infinity of the Most High. If evil may exist, it may continue without end, and can furnish no more ground of objection to the Divine Character.

Hence it would appear that the atheist, who denies that evil, temporal or eternal, can consist with the Divine Perfections, is, so far, less incongruous than the deist and Universalist, who admit that there is temporary sin and wretchedness, but deny that it can be unending.

11. If, then, sin may be without end, it is certain that suffering will go along with it. If man be immortal, he will be capable of pleasure and pain in the future state no less than in the present. Many forces must here be nicely combined and exactly balanced to secure the well-being of the body. It is subject to innumerable disorders, and liable to acute suffering from a thousand causes. The soul, too, is capable of its own joys and sorrows—joys which, it is a common proverb, exceed any pleasures of mere sense, sorrows which are more difficult to be endured. Innumerable conditions must meet to keep us free from pain for a single moment, and it is the exception when one of them is deranged.

It can be no light mischief then, which must ensue to those who set themselves against the Almighty. Reason can hardly expect that the world to come will be ordered for the welfare of those who have employed the good gifts of the present life as instruments of war against the Giver. The present life is a mixed state of good and ill, and the miseries of disorder are incident to all. It is credible that perfect goodness and happiness can only be attained by any, after the separation of base and ungodly spirits to a world of their own. Can there be happiness in such a world? Can it be expected that any state of being will be adapted for the gratification of vicious propensities, and ordered for the happiness of those whose undertakings are to work confusion? It can not even be conceived possible. The spirit of strife has wretchedness in itself, and no outward circumstances can make it happy. Nor yet, if its being continue, can it hope to dwell in eternal insensibility. In this life the godless may darken his eyes, and deaden his feelings till he sees not, and knows not his condition. Revelation is only consistent with reason when it declares that it can not be so forever. It is unlikely that a man can change his nature, and alienate himself from God, and be forever insensible of his wretchedness. The reckless liver may often, in this life, drown all thought and care; but ruin may fall upon him as in a moment, and awaken the sudden, insufferable feeling, that all is lost. The soul released from the flesh will awaken from that moral torpor, that state "past feeling," which is so often insensible to the real wretchedness of its condition. Nor can there be any ground for the expectation that it will be purified by suffering. All experience shows that suffering does not purify the desperately wicked, but only hardens and exasperates.

12. A common objection to the doctrine of Revelation upon this subject, that, in the words of Mr. Newman, "the current orthodoxy makes Satan eternal conqueror over Christ,"[1] has no foundation in principles of reason. That man may deliver himself to Satan—that the soul may be self-destroyed, does not make Satan conqueror of either God or man. It implies an awful responsibility of the human will, which can not, however, be explain-

[1] Phases, p. 48.

ed away by an assumption. Satan is not conqueror, because they who will not be won by Infinite Goodness will be subdued by Omnipotence. He would be conqueror if evil could finally prevail, or could strive in heaven as in earth. But Divine Love preserves the just from eternal strife. It is their support in this time of trial, that all things are overruled for their good, and that the reign of confusion must have an end. Satan is not victorious, because sin brings its own perdition—because the Will of God is fulfilled in heaven, and the eternal harmony is unbroken.

And that the existence of evil, though it be everlasting, is, however, no frustration of the Divine Purpose, may be inferred from discoveries of Holy Scripture, which are confirmed by the religious experience of life. Revelation declares, what experience often proves, that though all the sufferings of life are the results of moral evil, yet they are overruled by Divine Providence, to work for good to them that love God. Thus the original frame of things has been so constituted, that even the violation of its laws furthers the purposes of Creative Goodness. This truth may hold good beyond the present life. Though we can not fathom the deep designs of Providence, yet the experience of life, as far as it goes, seems to suggest that eternal evil may possibly be productive of eternal good; and that, not through any arbitrary appointment, but consistently with the truth that man may be his own destroyer, and in the course of laws which meet the conduct of free agents whatever it may be, there may be a fearful meaning in the words of Scripture—"The Lord hath made all things for Himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil."

Another objection is of the same kind. "Would it not have been better that the whole race of man had never come into existence? Clearly!" the inquirer replies to himself, "and thus God is made out to be unwise in creating them."[1] Thus when men presume to sit in moral judgment upon God, they set themselves above the God they judge, and find Infinite Wisdom to be folly, and Eternal Purposes trifling.

13. The late work of Mr. Parker is full of these criticisms on eternal judgments. He declines "to discuss the psychology and

[1] Phases, p. 48.

metaphysics of God, considering the metaphysics of man to be quite hard enough for him to grapple with and understand."[1] But, then, he decides them without discussing them; for he assumes a particular theory of the metaphysics of God, when he argues throughout his work, that because "the Infinite God must create all, from a perfect motive, for a perfect purpose, of perfect material, as perfect means;"[2] therefore, to omit his language, the revealed doctrine of future judgment is untrue; and "because he is sure of God and His Infinity, therefore he is sure of the ultimate welfare of every thing that God has made,"[3] and sees that the Scriptural doctrine of the consequences of sin represents God as "finite and imperfect."[4]

The question recurs: Why should the existence of eternal evil be inconsistent with the Divine Infinity, any more than that of temporal evil? Must not the Infinite Being, "Who creates from a perfect motive, for a perfect purpose, of perfect material, as perfect means," impart happiness to all His creatures in every moment of their being, without failure, without cessation? If not, why then ultimately?

Admitting, as he must, that pain exists in the world of a Perfect Creator, he says—"The wisest man is only a child as yet. Philosophy has read but few pages of this great book of nature, whereof all must be known fully to understand a part. When I know that there is an Infinite God, I am sure that His purpose is good, and His means adequate; I spontaneously trust therein. This instinctive trust outruns the demonstrations of science."[5] That is, the idea of God in man is not only, as with Des Cartes, made the proof of His existence,[6] but is applied to solve the difficulties and explain the facts of experience.

This philosophy is as opposed to the profound investigations of Kant as to the instinctive judgments of common sense. Most men will prefer the opposite course, and will build their philosophy upon facts. They will be apt to consider, that if man be a child in his knowledge of the evil before his eyes, he may well be a child upon its future and eternal consequences.

[1] Theism, etc., p. 105. [2] Ib. p. 109. [3] Ib. p. 112.
[4] Ib. p. 60. [5] Ib., p. 198. [6] See also "Discourse," etc.

With similar dogmatism upon the metaphysics of God, he argues, in language which we shall not quote, that there can be no such being as Satan, because such a belief makes God the Author of "absolute evil," and He must be "responsible" for such a being. To be consistent, then, the Creator must be the Author of the evil in the world. And so he affirms—"There can be nothing in nature which God did not put in nature from Himself."[1] This and similar assertions should lead to the inference that there are no such beings as evil men. But reason must here condescend to experience. Facts are not to be got rid of. But we are assured that, whatever the conduct of each may be, all will come right to each at the last; an assurance which many will improve, in a way Mr. Parker does not intend. Why the existence of evil men should be possible, and that of Satan impossible, it is not easy to determine. Mr. Parker's readers must decide whether it is more likely that finite evil proceeds from an Infinite Being, or that it is the work of the finite will, and tends to eternal consequences in finite beings.

To make God responsible for the evil which exists in His creatures, is another ungrounded assumption upon the metaphysics of the Divine and human wills. It is the assumption that the author of a cause is the author of the effect of that cause.[2] This weak postulate of universal fatalism is no better than a metaphor drawn from human contrivances and applied to the mystery of the Divine agency. A man who constructs a machine to perform a certain work, may be said to be the author of the machine's movement, and of the work. But the Works of God are not to be measured by those of man. Free-will is essentially the reverse of mechanical agency—to argue from an analogy of this kind, is to settle the question of freedom and fatalism by an assumption. The dogma can be known to be true, only when we are fully acquainted with the connection between the first cause and the second, and between the second and its effect. In its general application, it is a mere postulate of pantheism.

Natural Religion has therefore no conclusive evidence that sin and suffering must cease; but would seem to suggest, that as holi-

[1] See "Discourse," etc., p. 108. [2] Causa causæ, causa causati.

ness and happiness are not to be found in *all time*, so, fearful as is the thought, they may never be found in *universal being*. All we can affirm with confidence is, that the Divine Holiness and Love will insure the ultimate happiness of all who shall be ultimately righteous. We see that all are not righteous; we know there is such a thing as enmity to God in life; we can find no evidence that it must cease. But common facts of experience give fearful indications of its permanence, and assure us that there neither is, nor can be peace or happiness to the evil spirit. From the Fountain of Eternal Good the pure water of life can not flow to them that do evil, and, if it did, it would be defiled by their impurity. But Eternal Love will secure the well-being of the just. Eternal Holiness will establish a perfect creation. Evil is mingled with good in life; but it is reasonable to expect, that, as Perfect Holiness is over all, so there is, beyond life, a harmonious and holy universe, unpolluted by sin or suffering. It may be a reasonable wish, that every soul might be won to holiness and happiness; but, if not, eternal purposes can not be frustrated, whatever may be the consequences of willful wickedness.

14. On this momentous subject the Word of God confirms the worst anticipations of experience. It can convey to us only a partial and distant knowledge of the future state, but speaks in language which discloses the awfulness of eternal death. It confirms the reasonable belief, that the depraved spirit is influenced to its depths of being by its willful misdeeds, and explains that there is a change in its relations to the Creator, a certain disruption of the unity of being between itself and the Source of life, or, as it is expressed, an alienation from the life of God, a death in trespasses and sins. With many tongues, but one voice, it affirms that this separation from the Author of its being is fraught with fearful consequences in the state beyond the grave.

It is not a single passage, nor a single writer, who forewarns us of the "Wrath to come;" but psalmists, prophets, apostles, and the Lord Himself; and that, with the solemn earnestness, the deep feeling, the importunate entreaty, which show that they meant what they said, and were well assured of its truth. There is something very remarkable in the concurrent prophecies, so nu-

merous both in the Old and New Testaments, pointing to "the Great Day of the Lord," which is to close the dispensations of time; and, after the contest of ages, the confusion of good with evil, the long and patient strivings of God with man, to subdue the mystery of iniquity.

It is the great truth of revelation that God is Love; but, in its earliest and its latest discoveries, He is not that unconditional Benevolence which aims at universal happiness without regard to the conduct and character of men. In the earliest records of inspiration, He is not only "the Lord merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;" but also, "that will by no means clear the guilty." The warning becomes still more solemn when it is declared in the New Testament by Jesus Christ.

Even the atheist can admit the tenderness, the gentleness of Jesus. He came to heal the broken-hearted, and was moved with compassion on the multitudes. In the prospect of Agony unutterable He wept for the city which was about to crucify Him, and prayed for His murderers in the first keen torture of His Death. And yet it was He who said, "Fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." "Where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." "There shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." There is the same contrast in His life between His Love and Tenderness to the teachable and His Awful Severity to the morally reprobate.

These contrasts have been remarked. "I found the New Testament," says one, "to contain a revelation of two Christs." It is not likely that one person would have uttered words so opposite as those of Jesus, unless both were in accordance with the truth. It is equally improbable that any writer should have forged two characters, so marked and consistent in themselves, yet wholly opposed, as it is said, to one another; or should have ingrafted the one character as a forgery upon the other. Such suppositions are arbitrary and unfounded, and can only be held in ignorance of the evidences which establish the authenticity of the Scriptures. Nor, indeed, is explanation wanted upon a fact which agrees with their

constant manifestation of the Divine Character. It will be difficult to avoid the conclusion that the gentle, submitting, loving, serving, suffering Christ, is one with the awful Rebuker of vice and hypocrisy. His words of love and compassion add emphasis to His warnings and denunciations. Both were uttered by the Same Person, because both are true.

15. And it is important to notice the consistency of this truth of Scripture with the doctrines of the Gospel. Eternal Death is a mysterious and awful truth; the Death of the Son of God is no less Mysterious and Awful; but the two correspond to one another. If the Eternal Son be the Saviour, it must be for some great end that He has lived as man—to avert some awful calamity that He has suffered. It may be a fallacy to argue, as some have done, that sin is infinite, because committed against an Infinite Being; but at least the Death of the Incarnate Son was an Infinite Sacrifice, and Scripture is therefore consistent with itself, when it regards the death in sin as an infinite evil.

It is no less self-consistent when it declares that they who do not accept salvation can not be purified by suffering, nor recover their lost nature in banishment from God. If it were necessary that the Son of God should take the nature, not of angels, but of men, it would seem to be in this life to which He came that men must profit by the Deliverance He wrought. If His Blood alone can purge away sin, it can have no efficacy with outcasts. If Divine Power must recover the fallen, there can be no recovery where there is no Spirit to strive with the sinful; and there can be no Spirit with those who have heard the sentence—"Depart from me."

Eternal death is indeed an awful truth; but it is no arbitrary infliction of vengeance by a finite being. Scripture confirms the inference that it belongs to the necessities of existence. God desires not that any should perish, but that all should live. In the gift of His Son He has done all that was possible, even to Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, for the salvation of man. Yet men perish through their willfulness. He can not, then, be chargeable with their ruin. He removes the responsibility from Himself; and, as if foreseeing the cavils of infidelity, and the fearfulness even

of the sincere, declares, with the solemnity of an Oath, that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. And yet the wicked dies in his sin, though God thus desires his salvation. There is, indeed, an awful mystery in the will, and in the existence of finite creatures. It needs the Word, the Oath, the Dying Son of God, to support the heart that feels, to satisfy the mind that reflects on such a subject.

Yet, after all, is it less strange that misery should happen to the sinner than that sin should be committed? Reason views it as opposition to God, Revelation declares it to be odious to Him. Yet sin continues and abounds. Every one may see, in the world and in himself, that there is a war of good and evil in the creation, and that enemies of God and goodness are long without restraint in their impiety. This is not what would be expected from that notion of Infinite Perfection which is always formed by the cultivated mind, and which is found, when critically examined, to be the revelation of God in man. This conception flows from the original constitution of human nature, and is therefore a witness of *what ought to have been*, though it can not stand against experience as a witness to *what is*. Here is the mistake of every form of pantheism.

16. There are thus two facts of experience which could not have been inferred from speculations founded on natural conceptions—the sin and the suffering of the world. Scripture declares them to be correlative, and natural religion gives no testimony but in its favor. The manifold sorrows and ills of humanity, on which the deniers of revelation so often dwell, do indeed convey an impressive lesson to mankind. But it is not what the atheist interprets; it is not that suffering is inconsistent with the Perfections of the Deity; but that He manifests His displeasure against impiety. They are abiding memorials of the fearful truthfulness of the first sentence upon sin; perpetual warnings that no word of God can fail, whether it promise blessing or predict woe.

War, pestilence, earthquakes are signs of a judgment to come, and are so indicated by the Lord Himself. The ruin of cities, the devastation of countries, the fall of empires, the breaking up of happy families, the reign of riot and carnage, as if hell were let

loose on earth, give no support to atheistic fancies, but are announcements to mankind of that message which angels delivered to Lot in Sodom—"Linger not" in this world of sin. They direct us to "a better country, that is, an heavenly."

It is not by contemplating the perdition of the wicked, but by hastening from it, and by faith in God, that the faithful and loving spirit finds its joy and peace. It is in the contemplation of Perfect Holiness and Love that it ceases to be disquieted by the mystery of iniquity. In the communion of Jesus and holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, it anticipates an eternal gladness. It has the evidences of Divine Holiness and Love within itself, and is no judge of the destiny of evil. It can trust the Holy One with His own. It has acquainted itself with God, and is at peace.

CHAPTER X.

FULFILLMENT OF THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN THE PERFECTION OF THE LIFE IN CHRIST.

1. Consistency of Doctrines.—2. Mysteries of Revelation.—3. The Plan of Ages.—4. Perfection of the Future Life.—5. Divine Communion.—6. Godhead of Jesus Christ.—7. Dependence of Creation on God.—8. Divine Life of the Saints.

1. It did not fall within the design of this Treatise to examine any of the external evidences of the Christian Religion. But when we examine the different books of Scripture as unknown witnesses, who profess to deliver to us the Word of God, we find, instead of the inconsistencies alleged by recent writers, a strong testimony to their veracity in their undesigned concurrence to deliver one message to mankind. This observation will be found to apply to the many distinct parts and mysterious revelations of Scripture which meet in one system, and combine in one harmonious whole. From the first page to the last, obedience to God is life, disobedience is death. Man is fallen, and can not, without renewed energy from above, render the obedience which is due. The Old Testament perpetually anticipates a Saviour and Teacher of mankind; the New Testament answers the expectations of the Old.

We have noticed several remarkable coincidences of the Revealed doctrines with one another, some of them on those mysterious subjects which have constantly been involved in uncertainty by the discussions of philosophy; coincidences which could not have been expected, except in records of Divine Truth.

To take a few instances. There is a consistency in the revelations of Spiritual death. It was the first sentence upon sin—"Thou shalt surely die." The New Testament is addressed to a world "alienated from the life of God," "dead in trespasses and sins." The final sentence—"Depart from me," is revealed to be everlasting death.

The Great Work of Christ for man, in the New Testament, agrees with the early promise to the fathers, with the prophecies of the Old Testament, with the sacrifices and numerous types of former dispensations, as well as with the sacrifices of the heathen world. The doctrine of the Atonement also corresponds to those of the Fall of man, of his continued probation after the Fall, of everlasting life and everlasting death. To that of the Fall: for a corrupted nature, a world of confusion, can not be acceptable to the Most Holy. To that of human probation; which implies that all are restored to trial, and are individually accountable, each according to his talents. To that of eternal life and death: since it could be for no trivial purpose, and to ward off no slight and passing calamity, that God became man, and suffered for the sins of the world.

Probation, too, is not inconsistent with eternal life or death; for it implies that man must do his work when the opportunity is given him. If this life be intended to be preparatory to an eternal existence, there must be something awful in living only to become morally reprobate. The brief intimations of Scripture respecting the Fall of angels have the same purport; for while they appear to admit the possibility of sin to those who have not passed through a life of probation, they deny to them the possibility of recovery. "The angels who kept not their first estate He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude, 6.)

There is also, we have seen, an entire consistency in the Scrip-

tural revelations of the Divine Character. From Genesis to Revelation, in the promises and warnings both of the Law and of the Gospel, in the destruction of the old world, of Sodom and Gomorrah, of the nations of Canaan, and in the severe denunciations of "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," by Jesus Christ, God is not only Beneficent, but always Just and Holy, whether to the evil or to the good; always a "Consuming Fire" to the unrighteous, and a God of Love to the penitent. We shall find a similar consistency in the revelations of Eternal Life.

2. Infidelity gains as little by its criticisms of Christian doctrine upon questions manifestly incomprehensible. That the Bible contains mysteries beyond knowledge, agrees with the truth that it is the Word of God. Human systems of philosophy may sometimes boast to be easily intelligible. Sometimes they assume an abstract and mysterious air, and pretend to have said a great deal when they have said nothing, and to have solved mysteries which they have not approached. Sometimes they would persuade us that there is no difficulty in heaven or earth to be solved; and evading whatever is mysterious, suggest no question beyond the sphere of reason. Scripture is ever simple in its style; but its doctrines go beyond the reach of the understanding. A Divine Revelation must have for its design, to exalt men from earth to heaven. Its foundation must rest in the Mystery of the Divine Nature, and its subject must be the relations of Creator and creature. If man be destined to a higher life, his existence and his knowledge in the present world must bear some relation to his existence and his knowledge hereafter; hence a revelation which is to guide him from time to Eternity, however practical it may be, however it may decline to satisfy curiosity on speculative questions, may be expected, however, to raise such questions; and perhaps to suggest inquiries, which go beyond human language or understanding for their full answer. It is the wisdom of man, and becomes the state of trial in which he is placed, not to be unsettled and perplexed by single difficulties which may be brought against revealed Truth. The force of plain evidences, and the practical value of known truths, ought to guard the mind against curious questions of things which belong to the Deep Ways of God.

3. This is the true answer to some difficulties which occurred in the preceding pages. One of these had reference to the acknowledged frailty of man in his first estate. That he fell so soon, and involved all his posterity in his fall, can not be pronounced inconsistent with the Wisdom of the Creator, till we are fully acquainted with His Purpose. But the abundant manifestations of His Wisdom and Goodness, in His Dealings with man as he is, should repress anxious speculation on the condition of man, as we fancy he might have been.

Conjectures however, on the side of truth, may sometimes be opposed to conjectures against it. It is not improbable that the dealings of God with the race of mankind are, in some way, dependent upon the original weakness and frailty of human nature. To think we might have been created with a higher nature, and have been less liable to fall, is to imagine that we might have been as angels. But even to angels, and to all finite beings, there are always infinite depths beyond their reach. And, as far as human conception extends, to creatures of independent existence there is always a possibility of sin. However exalted the nature of the creature, however noble his endowments, there is always a possibility of perdition to those who will not be content with the sphere in which God has placed them.

The sin of man, as far as man can understand, is essentially the same as what is possible to every finite creature. Brief as is the account of the Fall, there is enough to show that the transgression was a failure in that faithful dependence upon the Divine Word, which must be the condition of happiness to created beings. That the lapse is not irreparable to man, as to angels; that, through Divine Mercy in the Saviour, life is still a probation to him, may be dependent on that frailty and mutability of his nature, through which it was so easy for him to fall.[1] But though one conjecture may answer another, we may not pretend to search the "unsearchable judgments," nor to understand the "ways past finding out."

For such an undertaking we must be fully acquainted with the Divine intention in that great plan of ages which includes the

[1] Εὐκίνητος ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ αὐτεξούσιος . . . δύναται γὰρ ὥσπερ πρὸς τὰ καλὰ νεύειν οὕτω καὶ τὰ καλὰ ἀποστρέφεσθαι. Athanas. Orat. cap. iv.

wrestlings of the Almighty with the mystery of iniquity. There are many indications of some great purpose to be served, not only in the life of every individual, but in the whole existence of the world—a plan of the Divine Wisdom and Goodness, which is unfolding itself from age to age. It is suggested by the very fact that mankind, of whom each is individually accountable, and each created to be eternal, yet do not exist, as distinct individuals, all in the same relationship to the First Creative Agency of the Almighty; but are so bound together in the ties of descent and consanguinity, that their sins are transmitted to generations unborn. The Fall of the race through the sin of one, the difference of revelations and religious dispensations in different ages, the selection of one family to be the special channel of supernatural power, the length of time which elapsed before the Advent of the Messiah, the partial prevalence of the Gospel spirit, after so many ages of Christianity—these can not be fully accounted for by the accidents of the human will, but must be included in one Divine purpose, as consistent in the course of human life as in the slow and certain progressions of the material world. That purpose we may know to be infinitely wise and good; although we can not expect to unfold all the mysteries, or to explain all the difficulties of a plan in which "angels and principalities and powers" are interested as well as we. (Eph. iii. 10, etc.)

4. But we see that good continually results from evil, in the common experience of life, and may expect a similar event in the existence of the whole race. One lesson, certainly, may be derived from it, which, for any thing we can know to the contrary, may bear fruit to eternal ages. The history of the world, with all its sinfulness and its wretchedness; the experience of human nature in all its phases of degeneracy; the perpetual defacement of the good work of God by rebellious creatures; these are the testimony of ages to the truthfulness of Divine warnings, and the proof, by many forms of experience, that fearful consequences must result when the creature, in selfishness and willfulness, exalts himself above his sphere, or aims to be independent of his Creator.

It is a doctrine of Scripture that the saints of Christ, in the life to come, will be beyond the reach of evil, or the possibility

of sin. They will possess, it appears, a perfection beyond that of angels. May not this perfection be, in the nature of things, a result of this present state of moral trial? And may not the existence of this evil world answer a purpose of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness in conducing to the possible existence of finite beings without the possibility of evil? Here again we presume not to scan the Majestic Designs of heaven and earth; but we may see how futile are human questions upon such subjects to form objections to revelation. The full vindication of the Ways of God belongs not to the creature. He will accomplish His Own work. He will manifest the Glory of His Perfections. "He hath appointed a day." "Every knee shall bow."

5. "The secret things belong unto the Lord, but the things revealed to man:" and it is revealed with plainness that communion with Christ on earth—communion in heart and life, in the spirit and in the eternal law, will raise us to the reward of Christ in heaven. Whatever be the Great Purpose of God in the world, whatever the fruit of all its trials and its troubles, whatever the unsearchable riches of Christ, whatever the fruit of His Soul's travail, whatever the fullness that dwells in Him—all is the inheritance of His saints. The Son is the "Heir of all things:" the righteous are "joint-heirs with Christ." The language of Scripture, without exaggeration or forced interpretation, discovers the eternal relation of the Father and the Son to be, in an incomprehensible manner, the foundation of the relationship between the world and God, and of the hope of glory to the Christian.

6. We have referred to the Scriptural doctrine of the Essential and Necessary Being of God. Jesus has taught us concerning His Own Being—"As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (St. John, v. 26). Thus, in the common meaning of words, the Self-Existent Being of the Godhead is "given" eternally from the Father to the Son. Other passages concur. The name of "Son," and "Word of God;" "in the beginning with God," "the Only-begotten Son in the Bosom of the Father" (St. John, i. 1. 18), "the Brightness of His glory and the express Image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3).

7. The connection and dependence of creation upon God re-

mains in revealed religion the mystery it is found to be in natural religion. But if words have meaning, creation is, in a mysterious manner, dependent upon the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son. "God created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. iii. 9). "There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things . . . and One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things" (1 Cor. viii. 6). "By whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. i. 2). "He is the image of the Invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature; for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." "By Him all things consist" (Col. i. 15–17).

Thus far St. Paul. St. John also to the same effect, and on the same truth. "All things were made by Him" (St. John, i. 3, 10). It is thus with reference to creation that the Son is called "the Alpha and the Omega," the "First and the Last," "the Beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. i. 11; iii. 14).

These passages and expressions are too remarkable to be unmeaning in any writer, least of all in the inspired writers. There is a depth and consistency in them which may be regarded as Divine.

8. There is another class of passages, equally remarkable, and very numerous, which speak of the life of finite creatures in its relations to the Creator, and will be found to confirm the anticipation, upon which reason is apt to fall in its speculations on theism and pantheism—that life, in its deep reality, the life of the immortal soul, is not the same thing in all men, but that there is some communion between God and the righteous which is not shared by the spirits of strife—a communion so deep and real, that the one are regarded in Scripture as alive, the other as dead; the former as one with God, the other as aliens from Him; the one in unity with God will hear the invitation, "Come ye blessed;" the other, having been without God in the world, will dwell eternally apart. That there is a certain communion of the righteous with the Creator of all, however unknown its nature, is both a plain truth of Scripture, and is indispensable to the harmony of other truths.[1]

[1] Irenæus has *ζῆσαι ἀνευ ζωῆς οὐχ οἱόν τε ἦν· ἡ δὲ ὑπαρξις τῆς ζωῆς ἐκ τῆς*

This doctrine does not rest on a few texts of Scripture, but is established by the peculiar and constant language of the New Testament. It is described as "Fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John, i. 3); and as "the Communion of the Holy Ghost" (2 Cor. xiii. 14). It is the promise of Jesus to His disciples that the Comforter shall be given to dwell in them (St. John, xiv. 17); it is His entreaty that they will abide in Him, and have life, as the branches draw their life from the vine (xv. 4); it is His Prayer, "as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us" (xvii. 21). Hence the usual expression of Scripture that Christians are IN Christ. They are raised from the death of sin in Him. "As in Adam," the father of all, "all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). "In Christ Jesus they who were before far off are made nigh" (Eph. ii. 13). They can "do all things, in (ἐν) Christ who strengthens" them (Phil. iv. 13). They have peace in Christ Jesus (1 Pet. v. 14). They are "called unto eternal glory in Christ Jesus" (ver. 10). After death they are "the dead in Christ" (1 Thess. iv. 16); and they look to be presented "perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 28).

And as they dwell in Christ, so He dwells in them. God "dwells in them, and walks in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16): "Jesus Christ is in them, except they be reprobates" (2 Cor. xiii. 5). Christ in them is "the hope of glory" (Col. i. 27).

These are a few of many passages, which can not easily, when viewed all together, mean any thing less than to confirm the probable truth of reason, that the relations between the Creator and the creature are changed by the creature's sinfulness; and that, in a peculiar manner, not applicable to all, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God" (Wisdom, iii. 1).

This, then, is all that it concerns us to know. The finite may not search the Mysteries of the Infinite, but to know the way of salvation, is to be guided "into all truth." Evil abounds in finite beings; but God is Infinite Power, Infinite Wisdom, Infinite

τοῦ Θεοῦ περιγίνεται μετοχῆς· μετοχὴ δὲ Θεοῦ ἐστι γινώσκειν αὐτόν. Adv. Hær. iv. c. xxxvii. And (ii. c. lxii.) he regards the righteous as possessing body, soul, and Spirit, meaning the Spirit of God; while the wicked are said to rise from the dead, possessing body and soul, without Spirit.

Holiness, Infinite Love; and Jesus has been revealed "to bring us to God." Live then by the perfect law—the law of Love to God and man. It is the law of Sinai, and the law of "the mountain," where Jesus taught. There is no higher law, there can be no higher. It is the law of universal harmony and eternal order—the law which comes forth with creation from the Source of all reality and all perfection. Live by that law, and "abide" in Jesus.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His Will . . . . which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him . . . whom He hath raised from the dead, and set at His Own Right Hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i.).

CONCLUSION.

Objective Truths.—Man accountable for his Belief.—But only indirectly. —Doctrinal Speculation.—The Church.—The Early Church.—Idolatry. —Pharisaism.—Human Corruption of God's Work.—The Divine Purpose constant.—Moral Tendency of Doctrines.—The Roman Church.— The Reformed Churches.—Nominal Christianity.—Moral Education.— False Professions of Christianity.—Perversions of Christian Doctrine.— Practical Atheism.—Antichristian Moralists.—Repression of Vice.—A public Conscience.—Growth of Atheism.—Purpose of Redemption.— Education.—The Eternal Law.—Natural Virtues.—Motives of Morality. —Christian Motives.

THE subjects which have engaged our attention are not mere barren speculations, but have already, in several instances, led us close upon practical questions of the greatest importance, some of them especially deserving of notice at the present time.

No reflecting person who considers the state of society and of religion can fail to see that extensive changes are impending. Indeed the country has been already, for several years, in a quiet state of transition. There can be little doubt that the spirit of melioration must extend, more than it has yet done, to religious customs and institutions. Every one who has at heart the welfare of the community, or is interested in the stability of society, will wish that changes may always be effected peaceably and lawfully, and may not go beyond the correction of abuses. Change is not necessarily improvement. The opposite extreme is ever but a change of evils.

It might be easy to deduce from the foregoing chapters many "inferences necessary for and useful to mankind." We shall confine attention to one or two, which appear to be of primary importance.

I. First, of the doctrines of Christianity. It has been our aim to show that there are truths of religion—objective truths, which can be established with as much certainty as any knowledge attainable by man. Though human words and notions can not

explain the mysteries of the Divine Nature, yet they are not incompetent to deliver to us some real truth of Him who is the Creator and the Judge of men.

The doctrines of the Divine Being and Character, of creation, of human sinfulness, and of Redemption by Jesus Christ, are not mere speculative dogmas, but are the foundation of all human duty, and of human destiny. The Infinite in Power, Wisdom, and Goodness can not be the Author of confusion. All His works are perfect. The universe is in perfect order, as from Him. The sin of the finite will is the source of strife and disorder. It breaks the harmony of creation. It brings confusion and misery upon earth, and is the beginning of the eternal strife of hell.

The recovery of man from that moral ruin—that spiritual death, which ensues upon resistance of the Divine Will—is the purpose of all the strivings of God with man in Revelation. It is accomplished by the same Eternal Word—the Son of the Father, by whom all things were made. He is the Giver of natural life to man, and the Restorer of Divine life to the soul. In the Redemption by Jesus Christ, the fallen are delivered from the slavery of sin and Satan, and are restored to a state of moral probation. Through the Work of the Saviour of all men, the alienated are brought back to God; spiritual life is renewed; the harmony of creation is restored. In the gifts of Grace, purchased by the Precious Blood of Atonement, men receive "power to become the sons of God" (St. John, i. 12), and to "walk as children of light" (Eph. v. 8).

If there be truth in these doctrines, it must be of consequence to believe them, and to be influenced by them. If they be the subjects of special revelation from God to man, it can not be a matter of indifference whether they be accepted or rejected. It is not likely that the Great Creator will interfere with the course of nature, and set aside in miracles the common process of its laws, unless to authenticate truths which are of consequence to be known and believed. And all who have had the least experience of practical Christianity are familiar with the power of its motives to promote goodness of heart and holiness of life.

Nor is there any thing unreasonable in the opinion that man is accountable for his belief. This is constantly a matter of objection in the present day. How can a man, it is demanded, be responsible for that in which he has no choice? Belief depends upon evidences which an honest mind will endeavor to estimate at their true value. To be influenced by hope or fear in the reception of what the mind perceives to be true, would be of itself immoral, and therefore pernicious to the soul.

But belief depends upon two things; the evidences, and the mind which examines them. The elements of knowledge are deep-seated in the mind; the principles of judgment spring from their hidden source within the soul. In that same depth of life, the conduct has that influence upon the character, which discovers, in the constitution of human nature, the manifest judgment of God upon all iniquity. So far, then, as false opinion arises from the influences of the conduct upon the mind, it is unquestionable that man must be responsible for it.

But it is chiefly in this indirect way that he can be held accountable for his belief.[1] It is true that he can not justly be punished for what is not dependent upon the will, and it is true that the reception of truth or error is seldom immediately dependent upon it.

It is in conduct, then, that man must find the duties which belong to him in life; and in conduct that he must fulfill the destiny which God has appointed him. In the order of God's gifts to man, the secret influence of His Presence stands prior to the power of performance; grace is before goodness; in the order of human agency, it is in the power of the will upon the outward

[1] On the opinion of the ancient philosophers, that "error of judgment, being involuntary, is not the proper subject of moral disapprobation," Sir James Mackintosh (Eth. Diss. in Encycl. Brit.) quotes Plato, Πᾶσαν ἀκούσιον ἀμαθίαν εἶναι (Soph. Ed. Bip. ii. 227); who is quoted by Marcus Aurelius, Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἄκουσα, φησὶν Πλάτων, στέρεται ἀληθείας. (Epict. lib. i. cap. 28.) Also Augustine, "Quis est qui velit decipi? Fallere nolunt boni; falli autem nec boni volunt, nec mali." (Sermo de Verbo). But according to Aquinas, faith is a virtue, "not in the sense in which it denotes the things believed, but in that in which it denotes the state of the mind which leads to right belief:" "Accipitur fides pro eo quo creditur, et est virtus; et pro eo quod creditur, et non est virtus." (Ap. Op., Paris, 1664. ix. 236.)

actions, and in the *conscious feelings*, that man has power to control and to direct. It is from these that he sends down the unerring messengers of conscience, to inscribe their faithful records upon the inmost nature, and to leave behind them there their influence for good or ill. His power does not reach to the depths of his being. He can not see, by any direct observation, whether his inmost soul possess the gifts of spiritual life. His sphere of duty lies in the outward actions, and in those conscious feelings which he has power to modify and to control.

When this truth is duly considered; still more, when the revelation of God in the constitution of the soul shall have gained that attention which its importance demands, it will be thought surprising that speculation has, in all ages, received so much more attention, and occupied the energies of men so much more intensely than moral improvement. It can only be through disregard of the Word of God, both in creation and in revelation, that doctrine is continually regarded as of greater consequence than practice. Speculation has, in fact, been the bane of Christianity, and has crippled the energies of the Church, and restrained its proper influence from the earliest age. Not but that, both in the present and in every age, many individual Christians have devoted their lives to the advancement of genuine goodness, and to the best interests of their fellow-men. But it can hardly be questioned that the history of Christianity upon the whole is too much a history of dogmas and dissensions; too little a record of moral triumphs and of social progress. The truths of revelation are the means; justice, goodness, temperance, the end. The moral and religious advancement of the race, as of every individual, is the aim and purpose of revelation. The Christian doctrines need not be questioned, nor their influence undervalued, before it can be seen that their discussion has occupied a disproportionate share of zeal and energy; while the most momentous, and sometimes the simplest questions of moral practice—questions which Providence has left to human thought and effort, are not only undecided, but are often involved in a popular confusion of thought, mischievous in its immediate effects, and, through the misconceptions of skeptics, made to furnish objections to Christianity.

II. One obvious result of doctrinal speculations is the incessant division and subdivision of churches and sects. Many have been engaged, of late years, in seeking anxiously for "the Church." It is rightly assumed that Christ left One Church in the world. All the creatures of God are originally one; one in Divine Order, one in Divine Communion. And, no doubt, the visible Church on earth would still be one, if the Work of God were not perpetually defaced by the sin of man. But as human sinfulness broke the harmony of the first creation, so it long since broke the harmony of the Church.

The Church was, at first, a united body of true and simple Christians; sincere, earnest, pious, and single-minded. In the true and spiritual worship of God, in continual adoration of the Great Head, Jesus Christ, they lived spotless and guileless, and often heroic lives. Their fame has reached us by well-known testimonies, heathen as well as Christian. With them there was at first no Idolatry, nor Pharisaism. They were charged with atheism, because they were not idolaters; but they knew well how to answer the charge; and, like those before them, who saw the promises afar off, they were brave and fearless in the worship of the One True God, amidst the impieties of demoralized, and malignant, and often infuriated heathendom. They had no need, like modern Romanists, to find cloaks for idolatry, nor, like some of our modern Protestants, to draw broad distinctions between morality and godliness. They did not worship a God afar off, but Him whose Spirit dwelt in their hearts; they needed no false Mediators, for they lived as in the Presence of Jesus. They had not one law for Sundays, another for the week; one for religion, another for trade; one for the house of God, another for their own homes. They wanted no idols, for, in their spirits, they beheld Him who is invisible; no subterfuges, for they lived by that Law of Order which had been fulfilled in the perfect example of God Manifest in the flesh. *Love to God and man* was not a mere phrase upon their lips; it gave living motives to their hearts, and principles to their daily life.

Such pure and truthful, such upright and loving spirits, are the genuine fruits of Christianity. They exhibit the work of God in

renewed man. But where are they now to be found? Where, the skeptic may demand, are these bright examples of the Christian character? They exist, it may be answered, in all the walks of life; though perhaps seldom among those who make the loudest or the most exclusive professions of religion. The Church still lives, according to the assurance of its founder, though He alone can trace its boundaries and enumerate its members. In the world, it is as true as ever that there is but little comparatively which can be called Divine. Even the atheist exclaims against the spiritual littleness of the age. In the world, with all its religious pretensions, and its boast of light, you see that selfishness of man in all its forms which ever mars the perfect work of the Almighty.

Of the many who take the name of Christian, how few comparatively attain to the spirit of Christianity. Even the sincere, how seldom do they show that earnestness of Christian endeavor which might be expected of those who believe it to be the great work of man in life to learn to love God more than himself; and to love man till the injury of himself, his own loss, his own suffering, would not be more anxiously avoided than the deed which would bring it to another. The sincere are often satisfied with a stunted growth in goodness; the half-religious want to bargain with God, and to save their souls as cheaply as they can; the multitude are deceived with excitements, or think nothing of the matter. The work of God survives indeed, but how is it marred by the sin and willfulness of man.

False worship has been one great corruption of Christianity, or rather, one cloak of human selfishness and perversity. Idolatry and superstition, which had been conquered when without, became conquerors when they were admitted within. The Revelation of St. John shows the decline of Christian doctrine in its commencement. This apostle aimed at the root of the disease, in the expressive admonition which he so often uttered—"Love one another." But the love of self was too strong. As the spirit of Christianity languished, its form became more acceptable to the world. The churches decayed during several generations, till it was but a miserable image of the religion of Jesus which fell under the sword of Mohammed.

Idolatry and hero-worship—for saint-worship is nothing else—are still crying sins of Christendom; and are palliated or defended by the very arguments which were employed by intelligent heathen, and, it would seem, also by the Israelites, when they adored the calf as an image of Him who brought them out of Egypt. Excuses and palliations are always possible, even on the most monstrous practices, as objections may always be made to the plainest truths. And is it not evident, that to adore the saints, and offer through them the prayers of Christians to the Highest, is to overlook the Omnipresence of the Creator, and to assign His Attribute to the creature?

And in the Church of Christ, as in the Church before Christ, as soon as Idolatry had been rooted out, Pharisaism sprung up to take its place. When human perversity and individual selfishness can no longer lower the eternal standard of right by false conceptions of God, it begins to delude itself with false pretenses, petty scruples, empty forms; and passes over the weightier matters of the law as too high for human attainment, or no longer obligatory on weak humanity, because they have been fulfilled by Christ. How often scruples usurp the place of virtue, forms of godliness, we need not delay to inquire.

Viewing, then, the history of man upon the whole, the fact can not well be questioned, however it may be accounted for, that human nature, as Mr. Parker expresses it, "has never yet worked well." It fell in its first parent; it became so utterly depraved that the whole race was destroyed, except eight persons; the new world, beginning even with the family preserved from the old, followed in the footsteps of the former; the nation set apart from others, and appointed to hand down the knowledge of Jehovah, and to be the keeper of His Oracles, were long sold to Idolatry; and, when this form of sinfulness was conquered by bitter afflictions, passed to that Pharisaical degeneracy which was so severely denounced by Jesus Christ. The Christian dispensation has added another chapter to the history of human sinfulness and Divine Goodness. Even in "the kingdom of heaven" upon earth, even in the Church founded by the Saviour, an enemy sows tares among the wheat.

Thus in all that is known of the history of humanity there is little to favor the theory of natural progress.

This Scriptural view of human history is not likely to meet with the approbation of Mr. Parker; and he delivers his opinion of it, in his usual manner.[1] Nevertheless, he gives us an example of this course of corruption in a case of Romish doctrine. After some observations on the Birth of the Saviour, he goes on to tell us, that in the course of twelve or thirteen hundred years the supernatural birth of Mary became a fixed doctrine; and now, he says, some of them are insisting on the immaculate conception of Anna, the supposed mother of Mary; and so, he adds, they may go on, forming doctrines by caprice, till it may become a doctrine of some future church that there have been seven immaculate conceptions.[2]

This course of caprice is hardly consistent, one would think, with his theory of progress. We have got to the second generation in eighteen hundred years, and shall need many more centuries to reach the seventh. To say the least, it is a long reign of caprice; and we need the Chinese chronology, which he allows us, that the world may right itself from these developments of perversity.

Mr. Newman has published a book, in which it is attempted to bring this process of "doctrinization" by caprice into strict accordance with the theory of development; but, strange to say, it is not the Author of the "Phases of Faith," but the celebrated Father Newman, who takes this view of the progress of doctrines.[3] His theory is consistent enough with the assumption of Romanism, that the Church, in all ages, has been committed to the care of an infallible living head. This figment has been supported, of late, in another Romish writer of some note, by the argument that it is an imputation on the Wisdom of God to suppose Him to have conferred His most precious gift on man, and then immediately to have permitted him to break it into a thousand pieces.

Might not the Deist here correct his theory of Nature, by observing the long ages of corruption which he assigns to the Church;

[1] "Theism, etc.," p. 65. [2] Ib. p. 57.

[3] "Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine."

and the Romanist, his theory of the Church, by observing the corruption of human nature, the greatest work of God in creation, and considering its frequent relapses and long ages of degeneracy? The facts of history, from the earliest times, are far from encouraging an expectation that the perfection of society will be realized through any unaided human efforts, or natural powers of mankind. The corruption of the first creation, through the willfulness of the creature, equally precludes the assumption, that the new creation in Jesus Christ will be protected against the inroads of moral perversity by any infallible guide or supernatural authority.

We have here, in fact, an instance of the Wisdom of God in that unchangeableness of His Will, by which the purpose of human life remains the same under every dispensation, from the creation of the first parent of man to the present day. The nature of man, and the condition of the world, are, without doubt, very different from what they would have been if sin had not wrought confusion in the Perfect Work of God. Yet, notwithstanding the perversity of the finite will, the Divine Purpose is the same as from the first.

The Unchangeableness of the Creator is not that of a mechanical agency, which is bound in the necessity of laws and causes. It is not the fatalist's law of nature, but a plan of action prepared to meet all possible events and changes of inferior natures. It is a plan which remains unchanged by the variable agency of finite creatures, and is prepared for every possible contingency in all the actions and all the thoughts of a thousand generations.

It is in accordance with the Laws of the Divine Conduct, that the condition of fallen man is not that of man in his integrity; yet is changed in such a way, that the purpose of life, discovered to us by natural and revealed religion, remains the same as from the first. Adam, before he fell, was placed in a state of trial: life was the reward of faithfulness, death of disobedience. All the children of Adam, notwithstanding the degeneracy of human nature, are born into a state of trial, to be dealt with according to their faithfulness or their disobedience.

The sin of man, with all its consequences, has made no essential change in the purpose of human life. Probation implies difficul-

ties and temptations; and it is quite consistent with it, that they may be more or less numerous or severe. The one external prohibition was the trial of faith to the first of the human family. The varied troubles and temptations, from within and from without, serve a similar purpose to his descendants. Sin has increased the difficulties of life, and robbed man of his ability to meet them. But by Redemption moral strength has been restored to all; and, if the trials of life be often severe, nothing is more certain, from conscience and from revelation, than that every individual of the race will be responsible for his own actions and powers. The Judge of men can read the hearts, and knows the motives of every deed, and takes account of all the circumstances of every individual of the race.

It is the truth of Scripture, and contains nothing unreasonable, that, without Redemption, mankind were spiritually dead; and that the great Work of Salvation has delivered them from that bondage of sin in which their natural powers would have been unavailing. They are restored to their first estate, not indeed of sinlessness, but of trial.

The intelligent Christian, of whatever church or sect, should learn, from the aberrations of human reason and the constancy of the Divine Purpose, to estimate religious opinions, more than has been customary, according to their moral tendencies; and religious customs and observances, not as if all customs were the mere marks of party differences, but by their adaptation to human nature. The consideration of the moral purpose of life should check that miserable jealousy of speculative or doctrinal differences which is so common — differences which are often of words more than things, and will generally be found, when calmly analyzed, either to resolve themselves into ambiguities of language, or to rest in dogmatism on things unknown.

Genuine moral worth is ever that which is to be most highly valued and had in honor. Wherever it exists, it is conformity to the Divine Order. Different religious systems may be more or less in accordance with Scripture, more or less adapted to the wants of human nature, more or less effectual for its improvement. But the holiness of a healthful spirit is always the great end and aim

of religion. In all the changes of man and the confusion of the world, it is the Goodness of God which abideth forever, and all human goodness is its reflection. Modern civilization has been developed and fostered by Christianity, even in those imperfect forms of it which have, for the most part, been dominant in the world. No Church, perhaps, has been free from great imperfections, whether in doctrine, in discipline, or in practice. If men were fair and tolerant, they would judge things more than they do on their own merits and by the Rule of Right, and not on the rule of bigotry, which makes every thing good to be on our own side, and every thing to be evil which is of another party.

Even to the Roman Church, though its errors may be palpable, and what concerns us more, its pretension to dominion in every country arrogant and unfounded, yet we need neither ascribe an influence of unmixed evil in the world, nor ignore the debt which Christendom owes it for its services in ages past. Undiscriminating censure is seldom the mark of truth. Whenever the imagination loses its sway over the reason, there will be an end of decisions such as we have heard of late, and the dominion of Rome will cease.[1] Meanwhile, we are not so free from inconsistencies and imperfections at home that much time or energy should be wasted in exposing the errors of foreign Churches. This may sometimes be a necessary duty, but it easily becomes a moral evil. It is consistent with human infirmity to make the censure of others the cloak of indifference to our own responsibilities. Perhaps such a temper is not without example in the religious world. Are there not many congregations in Britain, who will listen with delight to denunciations of Romish doctrine and practice, but will tell you their minister has not preached the Gospel, if he have dwelt, at equal length, upon those duties of man which fall under the Eternal Law, and which it is the very purpose of the Gospel to inculcate and enforce? Churches, as well as individuals, may gen-

[1] Mr. Martineau holds that in the earlier period of human progress, while imagination held the ascendency, and the understanding was little consulted, the religion of Rome was well adapted to human wants. Though no friendly critic, he does ample justice to the Church which "stood by the desert fountain, from which all modern history flows, and dropped into it the sweetening branch of Christian truth and peace."

erally find enough to occupy their attention and their energies within their own spheres; and it is generally an evil to go beyond our sphere to discuss errors and imperfections in which we are not concerned. If Rome have not delivered on, in its first clearness and purity, to the end of time, the truth which she received from the fountain; if the Reformed Churches regained the fountain, in the abiding Word, yet they have still much to accomplish before their practice will be equal to their profession. The superstitions of the Romish Church are not more obvious than the frivolous dissensions and endless strife of the Reformed. It should be the first care of every Church that its government be pure, and its discipline, its worship, its teaching, adapted to the wants, the affections, the capabilities of human nature.

If the One Church of Christ have been broken up by the sinfulness of man, there is still life in the separate parts. It is best cherished by mutual toleration, and the disposition to correct our own defects rather than to dwell upon those of others. The diffusion of true Christian morality will bring together those who are apart. The Love of God and man can be the only basis of reunion.

III. It is a frequent reproach which skepticism throws upon the Christian world, and not altogether without foundation, that, notwithstanding its boasts of heavenly light, and its affected compassion for the darkness of other nations, there is, after all, comparatively little of the genuine spirit of the Gospel to be found among us. That there is some reason for this imputation will be allowed by all who observe the vice and depravity which reign in towns and villages. Consider, for instance, the common spirit and practice of our trade. Its dishonesty has become a proverb. Many a heathen would repudiate, with indignation, habits not uncommon among Christian Englishmen. Every one knows, for instance, how prevalent are the practices of adulteration. Many who assume an air of devotion on the Sundays think it no crime to God and man to spend the six days of the week in selling false goods. They will poison their neighbors in their haste to be rich. They will sell adulterate food to the healthy, and adulterate drugs to the sick; and even to brave soldiers abroad, who have shed

their blood for their country; and, while they are selling their souls for their daily bread, will often be offended if they are denied the name of Christian.

This corruption of trade is generally imputed to the incorrigible depravity of human nature. But it may too easily be assumed to be incorrigible by those who do not look for its causes in the deficiency of MORAL EDUCATION.

Mistaken opinions of the same character have long been prevalent on the subject of epidemic diseases, not of the mind but of the body. Men have been accustomed to regard them as immediate Divine visitations, and to expect their removal by means of prayer, while they neglected to employ the remedy which God had already placed in their hands. But people are at length beginning to see that to pray to God for deliverance from evils which are the natural results of their own sloth, is little short of blasphemy, and are now paying attention to precautionary measures. They will, in the course of time, learn a similar lesson respecting the moral condition of men. It has long been a popular proverb—"Use the means, and God will give the blessing;" but few seem yet to know how much is implied in this wise saying; few have yet learned that in religious and moral strength and power, as in every other Divine gift, man has received of God far more than he has well employed.

These vices, unhappily, are not confined to that section of the community which professes to renounce the Christian religion. They are common with many who profess to believe the Christian truths, and hope to save their souls by a late repentance; ignorant that the chains of vicious habits, in which they deliberately bind themselves, can not so easily be broken. Nor are they unknown among those who are enrolled as members of Christian communities; who assume the tone of religion in their conversation, and think themselves entitled to its hopes and privileges, though their whole life is a defiance of its duties.

Defective views of the nature and purpose of religion are confined to no particular religious body or class of society. It is not without example that they who think themselves the elect, and regard others, often of better religious and moral character than

themselves, as reprobate from goodness—or, rather, as reprobate from salvation, for goodness and salvation are not always thought to go together—some, who imagine themselves to have found the truth, and to possess it as their peculiar treasure, may be seen, even in ordinary transactions, to be governed by no moral principle or honorable feeling; to have no higher aim in life than their own enjoyment or aggrandizement; to follow out their abject ends by perpetual intrigue; to be addicted to slanderous conversation, and fomenters of that worst of all confusion—religious bickering and dissension. It is not even without example, that men of natural honesty and good-nature have become less trustworthy, or less humane, when they have been enrolled among the members of a religious body.

Are these, then, the fruits of Christianity? Is Christianity to be held chargeable for the vices of those who assume its name? Any candid reader of the New Testament can have no difficulty in answering the questions. Christianity can not be held responsible for vices which it is its whole aim and purpose to repress. It is to be judged neither by the false professions of individuals, nor by mistaken views of it, which may be demoralizing. The aim of Christianity is true Morality: its law is that of love to God and man.

We have already endeavored to distinguish between the religion of Jesus Christ and its false professors. It is of still greater consequence to distinguish it from mistaken views of it. It can only serve the cause of skepticism to confound them. That even the sincere Christian will often be mistaken, and mistaken views have pernicious effects, is no more than may be expected from human fallibility. It needs but little knowledge of human nature to see that perversions of religious truth will easily have demoralizing effects.

The end of all religion is the improvement of human nature in its highest faculties. Is it not the fact, however, that in various quarters of the religious world doctrines are set forth and principles inculcated which must have an opposite tendency? By a large number of Christians, even the fundamental truth of man's moral nature is altogether denied. They think they can exalt the

Grace and Sovereignty of God by taking away the Free agency of man. They imagine they honor the Creator by regarding His works, in the living as in the material world, as no better than ingenious machines which, in spite of appearances, might be thought to work as He intended, if it were not that they are perpetually deluded with a feeling of free agency, when, in fact, they are always moved by prior influences.

Others again, who hold the freedom and moral responsibility of man as a doctrine of speculative opinion, yet destroy its force as a practical truth. This is the case, for instance, when the doctrine of human depravity is stated in such unqualified terms, that one might think man were in that desperate condition which would have befallen him if no Saviour had been revealed. The only effect of such a doctrine is to throw the responsibility of the individual will upon the corrupt nature of mankind. It lulls the conscience of the vicious to be able to shift the blame of his faults from himself to his unfortunate nature, or perhaps to Adam. The consequence is, that religious endeavor is discouraged, moral effort repressed. As if every man had not far more to regret in his own sin than in that of his nature.

The mischief of this false religion is nowhere so evident as in the education of children. It is frequently remarked, in the present day, how often the children of religious people turn out ill. And what can be expected when moral training is withheld, and moral power denied, under the pernicious notion, that they can be of no use, till God's time shall come, to shed some extraordinary effusion of Divine light within the heart, which shall overpower the vicious affections, and constrain the finite will by Sovereign Grace. When the young are thus indoctrinated with the utter depravity of human nature, and the co-ordinate truth of their redemption from spiritual ruin is forgotten, how can they be expected to aim at spiritual progress, or to strive for their moral perfection? This is a demoralization of the rising generation through the perversion of religious truth. And when so great an evil is forced on the attention of the community, it is under the form, not of a simple question of practical religion, but of a speculative question, which might seem to be studiously stated in the form least capable

of solution. Speculation on such a question easily runs beyond the limits of knowledge; the practical truth is obvious, both from natural and from revealed religion—No man can suffer but through his own iniquities; grace and power are given to all, for which all will be responsible in their measure.

Another form of this perverted Christianity is the frequent separation, sometimes, indeed, the opposition which is drawn between religion and morality. There are many pulpits in the country, and not confined to one denomination of Christians, in which you will hear little of the Eternal Law. There are many hearers who will take offense, many who will think their minister ignorant of the Gospel, if he dwell much or often on practical duties. The truth of Scripture is sufficiently plain. Practical goodness in heart and life was the very purpose of the Great Work of Christ, and is the only safe proof that the heart is interested in His work. Yet this simple truth is almost obsolete among the humbler classes, at least in some parts of the country, and entirely through the false religious teaching of a century past. The proof of true religion among the uneducated is no longer made to depend upon the law of love to God and man, but on inward excitements of the mind. The decisive question with these religionists, is not whether experience proves them to be sincere, but whether they feel inwardly "happy," often no more than whether they have felt happy at some by-gone period. On such a system the aim of preaching is not to guide the understanding, nor to win the heart to good principles, and generous dispositions, and honesty of purpose, but to excite a warmth of feeling of whatever kind; often to encourage a false fanatic faith in barren words or conventional expressions, which are the watchwords of a party. Virtue and goodness thus come to be regarded as something quite distinct from Christian holiness. You may hear from many a pulpit that "morality is all very well in its way, but will not get a man to heaven." And thus it is attempted to exalt revelation, by depreciating that moral improvement which it is the very purpose of all revelation to enforce—to honor God, by disparaging His Holiness.

No wonder that religious Pharisaism is the fruit of such a system. How much it abounds, may be inferred from the comparison

of profession with practice; from the high excitements and disputes about forms and observances, of no moral or religious efficacy; from the often vehement opposition to innocent recreations, equally indifferent in themselves.

By such means it has come to pass that religion sometimes appears to intelligent men to be at variance with common sense. To give ground for such an impression, can not be otherwise than mischievous; it becomes especially so, when skeptics are professing to inculcate the morality which, they say, is neglected by the churches. If errors of this kind be even partial, they are sure to be represented as universal.

It will not be thought that these observations are suggested by any disposition to disparage the present age in comparison with those which have gone before it, least of all with those immediately preceding. On the contrary, it is one of the most hopeful signs of the present day, that practical religion, and moral improvement, and general education, gain so much more attention than in times past. We may gratefully acknowledge that there has been, of late years, a revival of genuine Christianity, and at the same time question whether it might not be largely extended by a more general attention to the moral constitution of man, and his relation to that eternal law of order which rests in God.

That the foregoing remarks may not depend on the opinion or observation of one person, some extracts shall be taken from the evidence of a witness examined before a government commission, who is evidently well acquainted with the condition of large towns, and who can speak with much force and intelligence.[1]

"All business now is war. We have left off, in Europe at least, the musket and the bayonet, and have taken to a sort of Thuggee in the streets. Look where you will, they are all at it, stifling one another."

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"It is to my mind one of the most disgusting signs of the times, that placards announcing sales at 'hideous sacrifices' are sure to

[1] Evidence of Mr. J. W. Hancock, in "Appendix to the Report of the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the condition of the Frame-work knitters." Part ii. 1845.

attract customers. Few reflect, as they ought, that nine times out of ten the advertiser is either a liar or a swindler; that he means either to cheat the public or to swindle his creditors."

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"The competitive system is now an endeavor to pull down, and to grow great upon the ruins of others; but a better spirit may make it only an active endeavor to give to others as much as we can, and take as little as we can in return. . . . Such a system would dispense nothing but blessings, and increase them only from the love of doing good. It would be happiness at work. This is a dream at present; but recent events have diminished contempt against dreamers. Certain I am, that the competitive system, as it now exists, is a hideous prodigy in a Christian country, and that the Author of Christianity condemns it by the plainest implication. I believe, also, that the Church is the main cause of it."

"In what possible way?" the Commissioner could not but inquire, and the answer is—

"By preaching next to nothing but articles of faith. What do I hear every Sunday in our parish church? Exhortations to 'owe no man any thing, but to love one another?' No such thing. Is virtue ever talked about? Very seldom. Scarcely ever without some sort of disparagement. A whole stream of reverend gentlemen, one after another, are in an agony of fear lest the practice of virtue should beguile us into pride and self-confidence. There might be no need to teach goodness. It might be dangerous to walk along the streets, lest moral sensibility should be too much wrought upon by excess of brotherly kindness. A rogue might be a rarity. The whole world might be in danger of forgetting God, through thinking too much of his Command—'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' It might be needful to build an ark to save us from a deluge of charity, and disinterestedness, and generosity, and temperance, and chastity, and justice, and contentment, and integrity, and honor, and all manner of good works. The ten commandments might have been contrived for the especial purpose of upsetting Christianity."

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"I am aware that it is contended that, in the warfare of self-interest, each man takes better care of himself than would be the case on any other plan, and I am as well aware that there is no such doctrine in the Bible. I can not imagine that a worse principle rules in hell. Let any man name me a worse principle. Put it in the fewest words and look at it. See how it looks. Here they are—'*Every man for himself.*' Talk of Dante's inscription over the gates of his *Inferno!* This is the plain English of it—*Every man for himself.* It is written in English, the English of the new philosophy, over the gates of the world, and children are taught it as soon as they can understand evil. If a man says, 'I have a right to do the best I can for myself,' I might warrantably reply—'Yes, you have a *natural* right to do so, and you will do so, if you are a savage. You have also a *civil* right to do so, as long as no law is passed to hinder you; but as a Christian you have no such right. As a Christian you have a right to do as well for your neighbors as for yourself; and if you claim any right inconsistent with that, you practically renounce Christianity."

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"Nine-tenths of the population are practically heathens; and what they are practically, that they are really. It is worse than nonsense, it is a mischievous delusion, to call this a Christian country; it is a country of infidels, and a country of creeds. Convert it to Christianity—sound, old-fashioned, practical Christianity—and it will be a very different country."

That there is too much truth in these observations can not easily be denied. The root of the evil appears to lie in a widespread ignorance of the true relations between religion and morals. Their separation is the destruction of both. Men of the world may be too busy to join together what preachers are studious to put asunder; and neither can subsist by itself. Morality without the sanctions of religion has little power against present interests and inclinations: religion is but a superstition and a formality, which common sense will not condescend to notice when it fails to make men more honest, more truthful, more temperate, and more generous.

It should be the part of Christians to set in action all the forces,

and to call into play all the motives, which may engage men to the practice of truth and virtue. Otherwise the deist, and even the atheist, may step before them in truthfulness to God. The anti-Christian writers, whose works have been quoted in these pages, all profess to be teachers of morality, some of them even sufferers in its cause. Mr. Parker preaches love to God and man, and is prominent in resistance of the iniquitous fugitive slave law. Mr. Newman's great fear is lest the conscience should be "depressed to the Biblical standard;" a very groundless apprehension certainly, but not the less indicating his purport. And Mr. Holyoake often speaks as if, notwithstanding his atheism, he meant well to his fellow-men. It may be useful, as well as curious, to hear what an atheist has to say as a preacher of morals. After quoting a passage from the Rev. Sydney Smith, on "the unequal distribution of good and evil in the present state," which speaks of "the honest and orthodox method of preparing young people for the world as it actually is, by telling them that they will often find vice perfectly successful, virtue exposed to a long train of affliction, that they must bear these patiently, and look to another world for rectification;" "this," observes Mr. Holyoake, "is an ancient and prevalent Christian doctrine, but as false as it is old, and as pernicious as it is universal. We differ," he says, "from this doctrine widely; we indeed acknowledge the disorder and the anarchy, but we say—the order should be restored here, the confusion should be cleared up in this world, the rectification should take place now. It is not wholesome that it should be left to a future state; it breeds a contentment which makes suffering merit passive, and insolent tyranny triumphant. What! do you Christians tell us that vice is successful, and virtue does not answer in this world? We say virtue ought to answer, and as far as in our power lies, it shall answer; and we believe it can be made to answer. . . . You tell us, after eighteen centuries of interminable Christian preachment, that we shall often find vice perfectly successful. The more shame for you that it is so. While vice succeeds, society is a blunder, government is anarchy, civilization is criminal contrivance. What is religious discipline for, unless it takes care, and can take care, that vice shall *not* succeed?"

It has been the aim of foregoing chapters to show that it is solely through Divine intervention in the course of the world, and especially through the great work of the Saviour, that "virtue can be made to answer," even as imperfectly as it does; and that vice has not long since expelled it from the conflict. But *fas est ab hoste doceri.* These words of atheism may suggest to Christians, whether, through their exertions for virtue and for God, goodness might not become more prevalent and predominant in the world.

Revealed religion teaches patience under suffering; but it is misunderstood, when it is supposed to inculcate quiet submission to wrong. It requires men to war against vice in themselves first, but also in society. It is opposed to confusion, and tends to harmony and order. To restrict its sphere to individual improvement, is to leave to the deist and the atheist the higher sphere of general society. Humboldt regards mankind as "one great brotherhood, advancing together toward the attainment of one common object, the free development of their moral faculties."[1] When men begin to combine against vice, and see that to repress immorality by all lawful means is to propagate that religion which Jesus died to give us; when it shall be a chief aim of society to convince every one of its members, by all possible motives, that it is for his own best interest and happiness to live by the law of love to God and man; then, and not till then, shall we see any great and permanent improvement in the social condition of the world; then there will begin to be a public conscience against vice; then men will be judged, not by their success, but by their merits. Then villainy will not be triumphant, triumphant villainy will not be applauded.

Toward such a consummation there is happily a progress among Christians in the present day; otherwise it would not be a hopeful feature of the times, that atheism professes to be doing the work of religion. Atheism may gain strength amidst the inconsistencies of Christians, and the conflict of churches, and the strife of sects. This form of human selfishness may rear its head upon the ruins of Idolatry and Pharisaism. It abounds in Romish countries, though it hides itself from the strong arm of power. It

[1] "Cosmos," Sabine's Transl. vol. ii. p. 200, i. p. 356.

abounds at home; for religious indifference is atheism in every thing but the name.

But if atheism should prosper in its designs, can it be expected to be faithful to its pretensions? Whatever any of its promoters may intend, such an expectation must argue great ignorance both of history and of human nature. Scripture contains fearful indications of a great anti-Christian power, which is to be for a time predominant in the latter days. Atheism has been once in full dominion, and its memorial of blood is the most terrible page of history. There may be a still more awful struggle in the future. In such a conflict it will go hard with any church or system in which truth, honesty, guilelessness, good principle, and virtuous conduct are regarded, as by some in these days, not so much the great ends, which it is the business of life to attain—the very unity with the Eternal, which Jesus Christ came down to impart to man—as certain incidental graces or ornaments of the Christian character, inessential in themselves, because, when possessed, they can not merit God's favor; and of which the absence is easily pardoned to those who are falsely denominated "the faithful."

The truths of Revelation can not be too familiarly known. The Great Work of Christ for man can not be too clearly nor too constantly proclaimed. The inestimable Love of God is the perpetual theme of Christianity, and should find a ready response in every heart. But it may be worse than useless to dwell on the Love of God, and to forget its aim in all His dealings with mankind. It may be even ruinous to publish the Work of Christ, and to forget the Purpose of His work. It was no subsidiary design, nor incidental result, but the very purpose and intention of His Mission, to destroy the death of sin and to bring us to the God of Holiness. They who read the Bible with their eyes open, and in the disposition not to find confirmations of their own notions, but to be taught of God, may see that deliverance from death is deliverance from the power of sin; and that to be brought to God, is to be brought to that Law of Holiness which resides eternally in His Nature. "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of

God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John, iii. 8).

The end of all religion is the improvement of human nature in its highest faculties. The effects of depravity are manifest, we have seen, in the whole constitution of man; in his understanding, as well as in his affections, for both enter into his moral nature. It follows, therefore, that education, and especially moral education, is an essential and primary duty of religion. It is a duty of the fathers to the children. Every generation transmits the effects of its vices to those which follow; and, therefore, since religion is the war of virtue against vice, the virtuous and well-disposed should consider it a religious duty they owe to those who follow them, to use all possible means for the expansion and improvement of their moral and intellectual natures. Religion is, therefore, in a very defective condition, when doctrinal differences and sectarian strife are obstacles to general education.

To obviate difficulty upon the relations of natural virtue to Christian holiness, it must be considered that the Eternal Law of God is the Rule of universal Order of all creation. It is the Law of Harmony of all the creatures with the Creator, and with one another. In looking to that eternal law, the Christian religion aims higher than even those ancient theories of moral perfection, which are said to have been "so sublime that they could never be more than theories."[1] But it is practical in its influence, as well as sublime in its aims. In leading men to be "faithful in their few things," it prepares them to be "rulers over many things."

Man can have no perfect nor exactly defined knowledge of the law of universal order, nor any infallible guide on this or any subject. He may expect, as placed here in a state of trial, to learn in morals, as on every subject, from various sources, and by various means. His probation in life depends upon the employment of all the faculties of his nature. He needs all the light, both of reason and of revelation, and will still be liable to error.

It must be assumed that human nature, though universally sinful, is not utterly debased, nor sunk to the hopeless condition of

[1] Mr. Macaulay's Essay on Bacon.

devils. If it were so, man could gain no knowledge, whether of morals or of God; and must be incapable of spiritual effort or improvement. He retains the elements of that better nature in which revelation informs us he was created. His faculties are Divine gifts, and not evil, considered in themselves. Even by nature he is capable of many virtues, and, through Divine Mercy, retains a conscience generally determined in favor of goodness, and a spiritual constitution always strengthened and improved by virtuous habits, always debased by deeds and habits of vice.

It is, therefore, as inconsistent with common sense as it is with Scripture, to consider virtue to be evil in itself, when it is the fruit of a good natural disposition. Truth, purity, benevolence, are always good, *considered in themselves*, and can not be called evil even in an atheist. It is but a confusion of thought to call them sinful under any circumstances, and by whomsoever performed.

But though not sinful, they may be imperfect. And it is not a matter of indifference, but of practical consequence, whether they be called sinful or imperfect. At least, they can not be said to be sinful, except when considered as mixed up with low and unworthy motives. One who always tells the truth, but from no better principle than because he believes it to be for his interest in the long run, can not, with so mean a motive, be called virtuous. Though his conduct be right in itself, yet its performance is wrong. But suppose him to tell the truth because he has naturally a sound conscience and good principles of conduct. Although he is then virtuous, in the common sense of the word, yet his virtue remains imperfect, on the principles of natural as well as revealed religion, unless he fulfill that highest law of human nature which is impressed on the constitution by the finger of God —the law of love to his Creator. True virtue, even according to natural religion, rests on a feeling of duty to the Author and Preserver of life.

This doctrine of all religion is subject to perpetual question. But it is neither improbable nor unreasonable. The atheist may acknowledge no higher law than that of a good nature; but it is consistent with all the principles of Theism to regard the moral

law of humanity, as impressed on the soul by the Creator, not only for the conservation of the order of creation, but for the unity of all creatures with Himself.

Whether or no there can be unity on earth, without the unity of all with God, is a question which has been decided by the world's experience. We have seen that even the imperfect moral advancement which has been achieved on earth has not been without its obligations to the Scriptures, and to the supernatural revelations which they record. But even though, abstractedly considered, the unity of creation were possible, without union with the Creator of all, yet the Divine Law must fall short of its Author's purpose in one who denies His Being, and questions those Eternal Attributes which are the foundation of the Law of Holiness. It is perfectly reasonable, and consistent with common sense, that a cold, heartless, calculating performance of duties, to please one's self, or to be esteemed by men, or from natural good feeling or good sense, but without reverence or love of God, without a grateful sense of His mercies in creation and in Redemption, can not present us acceptable in His sight. If it can be conceived possible that a child should always do its parents' will, but only in the cold calculation that it was for its interest so to act, and with a heart incapable of beating with affectionate response to a parent's love; such obedience would be even more repugnant to the feelings than the most stubborn willfulness. It is not unreasonable, then, that the Author of our being, the Giver of every good gift, the Saviour of the soul, must require the heartfelt, loving, faithful obedience of His creatures.

The important point, in the relation of religion to morality, reduces itself to the old question of moralists—"Why am I obliged to do that which is right?" "Why am I obliged to speak the truth?" The Christian can not reasonably despise the answers which are given to this question by the atheist. I must so act, because it is useful to myself, or useful to society; or because it is the conduct of good sense or good taste; or, perhaps, because it gratifies the moral feelings, and gives peace and satisfaction to the conscience. Truth and upright conduct are, without doubt, useful both to the individual and to society. God, the Creator of

man, and, through the nature of man, the Organizer of society, Himself true and just in His ways, has so ordered all things that only right conduct can conduce to happiness. It gives health and harmony to the soul; it tends to the order of society. To do what is right is a proof of good sense; for man is so constituted by the Author of his being, that, except in violence to his nature, he can not look upon falsehood and wrong as other than low and vulgar. It is, for the same reason, the part of good taste to speak the truth, because man is naturally disposed to be pleased with the beautiful and harmonious. He finds tranquillity and lasting happiness in a good conscience and a sound nature, because he is the creature of a Holy and Good Creator.

All these motives may be admitted; and all may be employed with advantage in education, each to meet the peculiar character and temperament of the pupil. Every man possesses some virtuous elements in his nature; and, though education can not do every thing, yet he may generally be engaged on the side of virtue by judicious training in early life. It is one of the faults of education, that, as in other matters, it is directed so much to the loading of the memory, so little to the training of the judgment; so, in religion, but little attention is paid to the direction of the moral judgment, and the systematic training of virtuous tastes and habits.

Let all good motives, then, be brought into action in education, which may engage on the side of Christian virtue. Let it be inculcated that purity of motive, and honorable conduct, and goodness of heart, are useful to the individual and to society: let it be taught that a sound moral nature is an eternal fountain of the best pleasures of human intelligence and affection: let it be enforced that moral effort may heal the diseases of the soul; and that, through the growth of good habits, man is raised to that perfection of his being to which he is destined by his Creator. They who labor in sincerity will then discover, by experience, that their work must be founded upon the Love of God, and that the most inspiring motives are those which spring from the faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The lesser motives of morals are good, as far as they go; and

may not be destitute of influence; for God is the Author of all, and every where, in His works, has impressed the vestiges of His Holiness.

But only the Christian motives are sufficient. The experience of the world has fully proved that man, without God, is nothing, and can not recover himself from the servitude of evil.

With these Christian motives we conclude.

Why ought I to be just, and upright, and charitable, and disinterested, and temperate? Why am I obliged to speak the truth?

First: because God is Eternal Right and Eternal Truth. Because Holiness belongs to His Nature. His Attributes are in perfect unity. There is no inconsistency of one Attribute with another; no opposition of motives; no contradiction between Wisdom and Goodness, between Holiness and Love.

Holiness is the Eternal and Consistent Law of His Nature, and comes forth to be the law of a perfect creation. As He is One in Himself, so, in creation, He has one great design. There proceeds no agency, no influence from the Almighty but what is always consistent with itself. There can be no such thing in the Divine Procedure as we see continually in the actions of men—a pursuit of one object to-day, and the opposite to-morrow; a disposition for this end at one time, and the opposite at another. In all His operation there is unity of purpose and consistency of motive and action.

And as all which proceeds from God is in consistency with itself, so it is the effect of sin to introduce opposition and confusion. Sin broke the unity of God's works: it is enmity to God; it introduced disorder and confusion where all had been harmony, and peace, and love.

As all God's works are self-consistent, so their Almighty Author is Eternal Truth: as sin introduced disorder and confusion, so the author of sin is declared to be the "father of lies." "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it" (St. John, viii. 44).

Why, then, am I obliged to speak the truth? First: because God is truth, and Satan is the father of lies. Because I owe my being to God, and am bound to prefer His Will to the will of Satan. Because a universe of harmony, and order, and peace, and love, is better than a universe of discord, and confusion, and strife, and hate; and I, as a creature of God's universe, am bound to do all I can to lessen the influence and shorten the pestilent dominion of sin. I am bound to be conformed to truth and holiness; because God is Eternal Truth and Holiness, and He desires me to be restored to His Image.

As a second motive: I am bound to do what is right, and to speak the truth, because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has lived as man, and died for this very purpose, that I may be able to order myself by the Divine Law of Love to God and man. He became man, to restore the harmony of God's works, and to give new life to the soul of man. He died to make me true and just, and so to bring me back to God. I had been separated from God by sin, and could never have returned in my own strength. Sin, which broke the harmony of creation in its commencement, breaks it no less in its continuance, and I can not dwell with God till I am made free from sin. I am bound to be truthful and upright, because God must have loved me exceedingly when I was dead in sin to give so great a sacrifice for my salvation. Because such Love deserves my best endeavors to make a grateful return.

Such motives may well be summed up in one: Because when I had become an alien from God through sin, Jesus died to bring me back from sin to God.

For a third motive: I am obliged to speak the truth, and do what is right; because truth and right conduct fulfill my destiny in God, and are the beginning of eternal happiness. Conscience bears witness, in the experience of life, that well-doing tends to the soul's well-being: Scripture testifies that it tends to my everlasting well-being. It is essential to the perfection of my nature. Sin and confusion have overspread the works of God, but He intends me to be happy; for all His works are in harmony, all His creatures in happiness, while they retain the state in which He

placed them. Because the consequences of sin must be fearful, if I be not delivered from it; since Jesus, the Son of God, would not have humbled Himself to be my Saviour, unless it had been for some great cause. Because it appears, from reason and Scripture, to be the very purpose of life that I may learn to do well, and I have no assurance that I shall possess this power after death. Sin brought death and sorrow into the world. I am to put away sin, that I may have eternal life in Christ, and may pass from sorrow to blessedness.

I am to be truthful, and upright, and just, and chaste, and charitable, and unselfish, and guileless; I am to live by the Law of Love to God and man, because beyond the grave there is a life to come—a life which will never end, where I shall possess faculties of enjoyment as I do here; powers and capacities, as now, only far more keen and sensitive; and I shall need, there as here, the thousands of adaptations and adjustments, so essential to the well-being of body, soul, and spirit, which, there as here, I shall be unable to order for myself; which none can order for me, except the Almighty Creator, He who is Holy and Just and Good.

In fine: I am to be true, and just, and holy, because I am created a moral being; my highest powers are moral powers; God has placed me in the world for a moral purpose; Jesus Christ has died to deliver me from moral ruin, and to raise me to moral perfection of spirit; and God Himself is the Moral Governor, and contains within His Nature the Eternal Moral Law. He is Holy and Just and Good.

I am thus to live in this world of sin and strife, that I may do all in my power to renew the harmony of heaven upon earth. I may anticipate, what prophets indicate, the fulfillment of the prayer—"Thy Will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." But I am thus to live, though discord reign and vice predominate on earth. This little world of man's is but a speck in the illimitable heavens; whose laws, in their myriads of suns, are unbroken from age to age: the life of man but a moment in eternity: the whole universe of change but as a passing shadow to the UNCHANGEABLE AND INFINITE ONE. I am thus to live, even in a world of sin, that I may be capable of a sinless perfection, and

may live in a perfect moral world, in the kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord; where the will of God is done eternally, and His Laws evermore unbroken; where all is harmony, and holiness, and happiness, and unity, and peace, and love.

Δόξα σοί, ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν· δόξα σοί.

APPENDIX.

ON CAUSALITY.

1. Conception of Cause or Power.

1. THE question respecting the origin and meaning of the notions of cause and effect, and of the law of Causality—*Every change must have a cause*—is soon perceived, by every one who thinks at all, to be a most vital question of philosophy, and as important as any that can divide one system from another.

Causality is represented by Hume and others as a mere subjective notion of the mind, without validity in the external world. We are conscious, they argue, of the representations of successive phenomena in the mind, but can never see any connecting link which binds one to another, nor observe any thing in any succession of appearances to give us the idea of power or necessary connection. Experience discovers that certain events are conjoined in the same particular order of succession, as when motion is communicated by the impact of one billiard-ball upon another. This frequent association of experience is, after all, but a certain order of successive events, and does not warrant our giving an objective signification to the notion of power as the connection between things external to us.

To this reasoning it has been answered by many writers,[1] that if it were true we could never have possessed the conception of a cause at all. It is a self-evident fact, that we have the idea not only of consecutiveness, but of *cause* or *power;* a notion which, however it may have been got, certainly contains something more than the notion of succession.

[1] Thus Kant, Rein. Vern. p. 698. "The very conception of a cause so manifestly contains the conception of a necessity of connection with an effect . . . that it would be altogether lost, if, with Hume, we were to derive it from a frequent association of consecutive events, and a custom thence arising (consequently a merely subjective necessity) of connecting representations." See also Reid, p. 446.

We may consider separately the questions:

I. What is the meaning of the causal law, and whether it be universally received as a principle of judgment?

II. What is the origin of the conception of a cause, and what warrant have we for regarding the causal law as objectively valid in the universe?

SECTION I.

CAUSALITY A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE OF JUDGMENT.

2. Permanence of Nature.—3. A First Cause.—4. Causality, a Principle of Judgment.—5. Universally received.

2. The causal law, when properly stated and understood, is, and must be, a universal law of judgment. But it is subject to frequent misconceptions. Thus it is sometimes represented as an instinctive belief that the future will resemble the past,[1] or that the laws of nature will continue permanent, as known to man. This is to make the law of causality responsible for that with which it has nothing to do. We have, in fact, no such conviction of the permanence of nature. That there must be a certain permanence of phenomena in time, we have seen to be a necessary condition of experience; but it is not necessary that we should expect this permanence beforehand, much less that we should have an intuitive conviction of it. The mind is glad enough to pick up the knowledge which nature gives it, and needs no such anticipation. Nor is there any known necessity for the continuance of the laws of nature. Any hour might prove the expectation to be erroneous. We believe, indeed, that the sun will rise to-morrow, and living

[1] Mr. Lewis (Hist. Phil., vol. iv. p. 51) ascribes this statement of the law to Reid, and it must be admitted that, in his first work, he does not sufficiently discriminate between the laws of nature and the law of causality. Yet even here he speaks (p. 198) of "an original principle by which we *believe and expect* the continuance of the course of nature." In his "Intellectual Powers" (p. 451), he lays it down as a principle, that "in the phenomena of nature what is to be will *probably* be like to what has been." But he presently enunciates the causal law in very different terms (p. 455). "Whatever begins to exist *must* have a cause which produced it."

men walk the earth as to-day; but to affirm that it can not be otherwise, is to assume, beyond the law of causality, that we know all the causes of universal being.

But the causal law is independent of the laws of nature. If the sun should fail to rise to-morrow, if another day should even resolve the material universe into atoms, and discover to the wondering gaze every atom to be a living being, it would still be true that every change must have a cause. Whatever may befall the known laws of nature—whether it contain the causes of change within itself, or be influenced by some superior nature—though its laws should change from the stability of ages to perpetual change, till perception gave us pictures as transient and unconnected as the changes of a kaleidoscope; though it should change so rapidly as even to make all perception impossible, yet it would still be true that every change must have its cause.

Our knowledge of the laws of nature is, in truth, no more than empirical. Experience enables us to calculate the results in the concussion of two billiard-balls. That a certain substance which we call ivory is elastic, and retains its elasticity, is an induction from innumerable examples. But if the results of concussion are seen to be changed, while the balls and the circumstances of motion remain the same, we have then an application of the causal law; and are compelled, by an irresistible necessity, to ascribe the change of elasticity to some cause, whether internal to the ball or external.

3. *Whether internal or external* to the subject of change. This brings us to another common misapprehension of causality, which makes it inconsistent with free-will, and with a First Cause of creation. The cause of the mind's volitions is the mind itself; the Cause of all subordinate being is the Self-existent Being. If it be argued that we want a previous cause of the mind's determination, and a previous cause of that cause, and so on to infinity; and if similar reasoning be extended to the volitions, or to the existence of the Creator, it is a sufficient reply that this is to press the law of causality beyond its sphere. It excludes the possibility of origination from nothing, but can not preclude a self-originating power of living beings, whether created or uncreate.

4. Another misapprehension of the law of causality furnishes an objection which has been often confuted, especially in the controversies on innate ideas. The law can not be universal, it is sometimes argued, because few men even understand it, and most men require much explanation and argument before they will give it their assent. Thus a recent writer[1] informs us that he had met with an intelligent student of chemistry, whom he had found it impossible to convince that the law is universally true.

This remark involves the notion, that an instinctive belief must be impressed upon the mind in the English tongue. But the mind may unconsciously be bound by a principle of judgment, of which it never becomes cognizant, though it can not contravene it in any particular case. Most men would require a good deal of explanation to convince them that sensation, without intelligence, could never give perception; but it is not the less a universal law of mind. Many principles and processes of the mind are brought, with difficulty, within the compass of reflective thought; there may be others which lie wholly beyond its reach; some, perhaps, which could not be expressed in words, nor even made intelligible to human faculties.

5. That every event, every change, every commencement must have a cause, and every series of causes must either be without limitation, or must depend upon an absolute First Cause, itself uncaused, and can not have originated in nothing, is seen to be the universal judgment of men, as soon as it is understood. It expresses what all feel, and can not help feeling. It meets us under various forms. It is sometimes stated generally of all finite existence, in such terms as "Ex nihilo nihil fit," "Something exists, therefore something must always have existed," "If, at any previous time, there had been absolute nothingness, there must always have been absolute nothingness." Even the atheist assents to the principle, and has recourse to an infinite chain of finite causes to shelter his unavoidable convictions from the only possible alternative of a self-originating cause.

Or to take an humbler example. A stone is known as an inert mass, which never moves but to some external force. But sup-

[1] Mr. Lewis, Hist. Phil., iv. p. 131.

pose we were to see a stone rise from the ground and fly through the air, apparently of its own accord. This would be contrary to all known laws of nature, but it is conceivable. Every man possessed of the common faculties of thought would be sure that the stone had moved in obedience to some invisible cause, whether external to it or internal. A student of chemistry would be a wonderful, intellectual alchemist, if he could conceive it possible for a stone to move without internal or external cause of its motion, whether it were on earth, or in the moon, or in any region of the universe.

We conclude, then, that the law of causality is universally received as a subjective principle of knowledge.

SECTION II.

OBJECTIVE VALIDITY OF THE LAW OF CAUSALITY.

6. Known Existence implies Causation.—7. True in the World of Experience.—8. True beyond Experience.—9. Origin of the Law.

6. The important question remains, what warrant have we for ascribing an objective meaning to our subjective law? How can we know our conception of power, and of the connection of events by power, to be not mere notions, but to belong really to the outward world. And if they do apply objectively, how are we to account for the coexistence of an objective law of being with a subjective law of thought, both of universal application?

First, then, How do we know that the mental conception of cause corresponds to something real and external to the mind, and that the mental law of causality is true in its application to the external world? The answer is, that we know it from that ultimate fact of perception which is the foundation of all knowledge. We have precisely the same warrant for considering the notion of cause or power to be something real in the outward world, as for considering that the outward world exists at all. The one knowledge carries the other along with it. The one is implied in the other.

The notion of cause or power is obtained, in the first instance,

by observing the operation of our own minds, and the effects of their action in the world without. When the hand strikes a billiard-ball and sets it in motion, the mind has, in the words of Sir John Herschel, "a distinct and immediate personal consciousness" of its exertion. But the same act which discovers the power of the mind discovers that of the outward world to produce sensation. The hand moves the billiard-ball, the ball causes feeling in the hand; the mind has an immediate apperception of opposing powers, which gives it an immediate cognition of the existence of itself and the world in mutual relation. There is here no arbitrary transference of the power of the mind to the outward world. The two are co-ordinate, and the mind has precisely the same warrant for concluding that there is power or force external to it, as that it possesses power of its own.

But it is discovered yet farther, upon attention, that the feeling produced by the ball striking the hand is only one of several impressions, by which alone the ball is known as an existing thing. If it be touched, it produces a certain impression of smoothness or roughness, which varies in different bodies. Similarly it gives the perception of some color through the eye. It is only in these perceptions, and by means of them, that the external body is known to exist at all. And in every one of them, it is discovered as something in action and reaction with the powers of the mind or self.

It is true that the external body is, in no case, the sole cause, but only one of several causes of the particular perception. The sensation always depends upon the properties of the nerves, and often upon several external causes. But since it is found in experience—what is essential to all experience—that to the same mind, and through the same nerve, the sensations vary with the various outward occasions, it becomes allowable to consider the external body as the cause of the mental perception. It is when the mind finds the causes of its different sensations diverging from one body, that it spontaneously gains the notion of an object; just as the eye sees the image of a luminous point in the position from which the rays of light diverge after reflection or refraction. It may be one great use of double organs to assist the mind when it is learning to perceive.

Or, to take another example: The fire burns my finger to-day. Suppose I should touch it without injury to-morrow. The fire is then no longer what it was to me. If other observations prove that my sensibility remains the same, it is evident that the fire has undergone some change of its properties. But it is still perceived as a luminous object. It was known before as a cause which affected both the sight and the touch. It is now known as a cause which affects the former sense alone. But suppose the laws of nature change farther, and the fire cease also to be visible or in any way discoverable. To me, then, it ceases to exist. As long as an object exists it is known as the cause of certain sensations; and when no longer known as a cause, it is no longer known as an existing thing.

Thus the conception of power is implied in that of existence, and gives it the only meaning we can attach to it. In investigating the origin of our cognitions of the mind and the world, and attempting to go back from the present experience to its first causes, it appears that the notion of power is the ultimate point that we can reach. Whether the mind analyze its present perceptions, or look back to the commencement of its spontaneous life, this notion may be said to be the very first principle of intelligent consciousness, and to correspond to the ultimate element which intelligence can attain to in all consciousness.

7. Thus, in the relation between the mind and the world, the law of causality is of universal application, and signifies that in the sphere of empirical knowledge the mind can perceive things only in relation to itself. It also holds good in the relation between different bodies in the outward world of experience. It is a law of being as well as a law of thought. The external world is known as possessed of certain properties or powers, which may communicate their potencies from one body to another, and so effect the various movements and changes discovered in experience. If the billiard-ball strike another ball instead of the hand, it either strikes with the same force, so that the difference of the effect is owing to the body which is struck, or else it possesses the faculty of acting with a change of disposition toward different substances. That material bodies possess no such faculty can not be concluded from

the law of causality. It is experience which discovers that some substances retain their constant properties and powers, and, when they come into collision, or are brought within the conditions of chemical agency, strike or act with constant impartiality and uniformity. But it must follow from the causal law, that a body which can act with different forces or affinities under the same mechanical or chemical conditions, and without external cause of its change of disposition, must be moved to action by some power internal to itself, which would manifestly be equivalent to assigning it the chief faculty of a living being.

8. But the causal law can not be restricted to the world of experience. It may be affirmed with certainty to hold good in a world, which, from the rapid succession of its changes, could not fall within the observation of the senses. In such a world the *materials* of knowledge would be wanting. The mind would remain in darkness, not from any incapacity of its own, but from the want of organs sufficiently quick and delicate. Causality is not only a condition of sensation, it is also a principle of thought, and must be held applicable to every form of being which could be brought within the comprehension of the mind. It extends to every change or commencement, but can not be considered to govern the agency of a first or self-originating cause. Hence when it is said to be of universal application, it must still be limited to the universe of the knowable. To interdict its application to the motives of the mind or of the Deity, is to affirm that their internal nature is incomprehensible. It may be said, no doubt, that the internal nature of matter may also be incomprehensible. But it is equally true, that matter, in its ultimate substratum, or first cause of its existence, may be dependent on the energy of a living mind.

All human knowledge is, in its very nature, subject to the law of causality, which carries it to a First Cause uncaused. That First Cause may thus, like the mind of man, be known to exist, though the manner of His existence transcend the faculties of human nature.

9. The question remains: granted that causality is a universal principle of thought, and has objective application in the world;

whence have we gained possession of the universal and necessary judgment—every change must have a cause? How are we to account for the coexistence of a necessary and universal law of being, with a necessary and universal law of thought?

It is evident that we can not have derived the intellectual principle from common experience, that is, from that observation of the world by the developed mind, which informs us of the ordinary laws and properties by which bodies are known. Common experience can never furnish us with judgments, which carry along with them the conviction of universality and necessity. It tells us *what is* in certain cases, but can never tell us *what is universally*, nor *what must be of necessity*. That the sensibility of the mind and the properties of the nervous organism remain, for the most part, the same in different perceptions, are facts of experience. That beings exist under the two classes of mind and matter, of which the one originates motion, the other only transmits it—that of external objects, some, like the perceiving mind, show powers of acting with intelligence, while others act with the uniformity of mechanical causation, are also truths of experience. But that every change must have a cause is prior to all experience. The mind can discover it to be prior not only to the existence of matter, but even to its own existence. So far is it from being a mere subjective property of the intelligence. It is an objective property of that world of possible experience in which the mind finds itself to exist, but in which it can discover no necessity of its own existence.

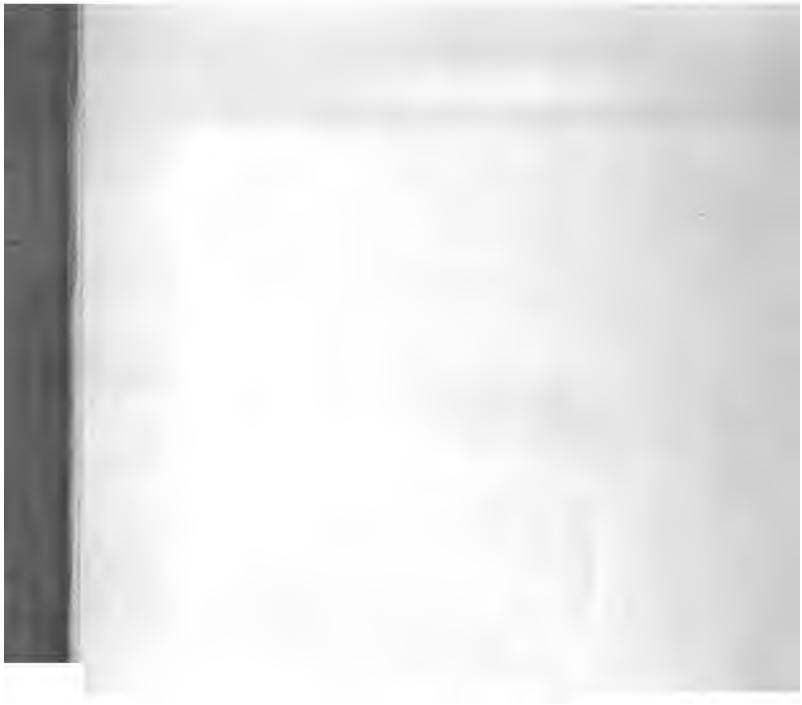
It follows, then, that the old dogma—"*Nihil in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu*," can not be true. Nor does it appear that the addition of Leibnitz—"*nisi ipse intellectus*," is sufficient to account for the facts of causality. For that which belongs originally to the intellect itself can be no more than a law of pure thought. It has no objective significancy. This principle does not even assure the mind of the reality of what it receives through the senses. It shuts us up within the subjective consciousness, and gives no passage to the outward world.

The complete solution of the question we may anticipate to be impossible. Common perception is itself a mystery. There must

be some adaptation between matter and mind to make it possible. The coexistence of the subjective with the objective law of causality may itself be a part of that original adaptation. If it be considered an original law of thought, it must be considered also an original law of being, in virtue of which it becomes cognizable. But it is not necessary to assume the coexistence of distinct original laws. The subjective law, though not derived from experience, may yet be a result of that communion between mind and matter in every perception, which gives rise to experience.

Beyond that province of the mind's operations which lies within the reach of our reflective attention, the mind not only possesses certain innate powers, but spontaneously applies them in its intercourse with the world; and is able, by means of them, to draw inferences and to acquire cognitions. Of these the cognition of power, or causality, is the earliest that can be traced. It is not obtained from the habitual observation of consecutive events. Causality is not a mere notion, it is a cognition. It has not been derived from experience, but has arisen in that prior communication between mind and matter, in which perception and common experience have their foundations. The mind emerges from that *primary experience* to the common experience of life, already possessed of the knowledge that there is an existing self, and an existing world; and that existence, in either of them, shows itself in properties or in actions, that is, under various forms of power.

The objective law of causation becomes a subjective law in the same primary experience. Objective causes awaken the mind to its life of observation and thought in their own world of properties and powers, but can not give it the faculty of comprehending an existence which is not subject to causality. The world of possible knowledge is a world of properties and powers; and it is in this world that the law of causality is universally and necessarily true. The law can carry us but a single step beyond the world of change. It may assure us that either it has existed eternally in all its potencies, or has been originated by a Power superior to all causality—a Power unchangeable and eternal. It may assure us that all the powers or potencies of every state of finite exist-

ence, unless continually derived from a Superior Being, must have been contained in every preceding state. It may carry us to an Uncaused First Cause, containing eternally in Himself the powers and potencies of all being. It can neither fathom the Depths of His Existence, nor search the Motives of His Operation.

THE END.